

Argie to wed
alian count

ONDON (AFP) — Britain's Duchess of York, Catherine, is to wed Prince Andrew, a 35-year-old playboy, in a ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral in London on September 17. The couple have been romantically linked since last year, his estranged wife told The Daily Mirror newspaper Monday. Catherine, 34, is the daughter of the late Prince Philip and the late Queen Elizabeth II. She is the youngest daughter of the late Queen Elizabeth II. She is the youngest daughter of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

bride wears white
nd so do the
wedding guests

ONDON (R) — The bride wore white, and so did the wedding guests when Catherine, Duchess of York, married Prince Andrew, 35, in a ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral in London on September 17. The couple have been romantically linked since last year, his estranged wife told The Daily Mirror newspaper Monday. Catherine, 34, is the daughter of the late Prince Philip and the late Queen Elizabeth II. She is the youngest daughter of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Madonna angers
Hindus this time

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Madonna has angered Catholics and fundamental Christians with her provocative use of the Virgin Mary in her music video, "The Way You Make Me Feel." The video, which features Madonna in a white, flowing dress, was released on September 15. The video, which features Madonna in a white, flowing dress, was released on September 15.

Your self-worth
is metered by
your weight

NEW YORK (AP) — For her, it's a battle. She's a 25-year-old model, and she's a 25-year-old model. She's a 25-year-old model, and she's a 25-year-old model. She's a 25-year-old model, and she's a 25-year-old model. She's a 25-year-old model, and she's a 25-year-old model. She's a 25-year-old model, and she's a 25-year-old model.

I wanted to
be the first to
introduce them
to Singapore

SINGAPORE (AP) — Singapore's first man-made island, U.S.-made artificial island, is to be built in the South China Sea. The island, which is to be built in the South China Sea, is to be built in the South China Sea. The island, which is to be built in the South China Sea, is to be built in the South China Sea.

Settler wounds Palestinian youth

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — An Israeli shot and wounded a Palestinian teenager Tuesday as schoolchildren pelted passing Israeli cars with stones near this West Bank city, witnesses said. Mohammad Musa Dwaish, a 16-year-old, from Zatura village east of Bethlehem, was hit in the thigh by a bullet and was taken to a hospital in Arah east Jerusalem, witnesses said. The Israeli, apparently a Jewish settler, stopped his car and shot at the schoolchildren on a road which passes by Zatura and leads to two nearby Jewish enclaves, Maaleh Amos and Tekoa, the witnesses said. An Israeli police spokeswoman, Linda Menubin, said police had opened an investigation into the shooting but had no further information.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جريدة يومية سياسية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الرأي»

Volume 23 Number 6944

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1998, JUMADA I 25, 1419

Price: Jordan 200 fils

Paying condolences to family of killed policeman: Crown Prince: Jordan will not allow infringement on its security, stability

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Tuesday said that Jordan will not allow any infringement on its security and stability, stressing that justice will take its course.

The Regent was speaking during his visit to the Ajarmeh clan where he offered condolences over the death of Sergeant Mohammad Shaher Ajarmeh who was killed while performing his official duties.

Prince Hassan who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Rashid and acting Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff General Eid Kamel Rweidan expressed deep sympathy over the death of the police officer.

He praised the police force and the Armed Forces for their sacrifices to safeguard the country's security and stability.

"We will not forget our martyrs who fall while in the line of duty and we consider their service as setting a good example for others," said Prince Hassan.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and HRH Prince Rashid pay condolences Tuesday to the family of Special Forces Private Nahir Al Omari who was killed while performing his duties (Photo by Boghos)

Ajarmeh was killed Saturday night while trying to question two passengers in connection with attacks on two pharmacies.

Later, the Crown Prince paid a visit to Al Omari's family where he offered condolences over the death of Special Forces Private Nahir Al Omari who was also killed while performing his duties.

Prince Hassan also paid a field visit to one of the formations of the Third Royal Armoured Division training area where he attended military exercises.

Israel refuses to return bodies of slain Awadallah brothers

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Palestinian National Authority has lodged a complaint with Israel over its refusal to return the bodies of two leading Islamicists shot dead last week, a Palestinian cabinet minister said Tuesday.

Civil Affairs Minister Jamil Tarifi said the authority had asked Israel to hand over the bodies of brothers Adel and Imad Awadallah for a proper funeral but had been informed Monday that the Israelis had buried them.

"We have now submitted an official complaint," Tarifi said. "We have our tradition and religious rites in burying them. They said this decision is final," Tarifi told Reuters.

Israeli security forces shot dead the Awadallahs last Thursday in a raid on a remote country house near the West Bank city of Hebron. Both were fugitive members of the armed wing of Hamas, which has killed scores of Israelis in suicide bombings.

Israel said Sunday that it would not release the bodies to the Awadallah family because of security concerns.

"The funeral itself would be a generator of violence," said General Moshe Ya'alon, head of the Israeli army's central command which includes the

Ross likely to return home empty-handed

TEL AVIV (AP) — Saying "it's decision time," Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the Palestinians on Tuesday they would have to commit to a relentless campaign against Islamists if they want Israel to hand over more West Bank land.

Once such guarantees are given, a deal on a troop pullback can be struck quickly, Netanyahu told reporters.

The Palestinians, in turn, blamed Israel for lack of progress, saying Netanyahu has yet to accept a U.S. compromise plan for an Israeli troop withdrawal from 13 per cent of the West Bank and a blueprint for a Palestinian campaign against Islamists.

The Palestinians accepted the proposal several months ago.

U.S. envoy Dennis Ross has been trying for the past week to narrow the gaps between the two sides. However, he has made no apparent progress and it appeared increasingly likely he would return to Washington empty-handed by the end of the week.

The Palestinians demanded that Ross publicly blame Israel for the failure of his mission.

"Mr. Ross is still continuing his efforts to get an Israeli 'yes' on the American initiative, but if he

can't, then at least he must clarify what happened during his visit and that Israel is responsible for the deadlock," said the chief Palestinian negotiator, Saeb Erekat.

Israel has said the scope of withdrawal was no longer an issue, pointing to its offer to hand over 10 per cent of the land in full. The remaining three per cent would be declared a nature reserve, with land use restrictions for the Palestinians and Israel retaining control over security.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Tuesday, Ross planned talks with mid-level Palestinian and Israeli negotiators, U.S. officials said.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

The Palestinians have denied they have accepted the offer and said the size of the pullback was still the key item on the agenda.

On Wednesday, he was to brief leaders in Amman and on Thursday, he was to hold another round of talks with Netanyahu and Arafat.

In other developments Tuesday, Israel eased its closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, allowing 7,000 Palestinian workers and 3,000 businesspeople to enter Israel. Israel had sealed its borders pre-emptively last week after the Islamists group Hamas threatened to carry out attacks in Israel in response to the killing of two top Hamas fugitives by Israeli troops.

UNRWA employees strike in protest of low pay, work conditions

By Ghafiah Akul

AMMAN — Around 6,000 employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Amman staged a one-day strike on Tuesday paralysing vital social, educational and health services offered to tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees in the Kingdom.

Several UNRWA workers were standing in front of the agency's regional office in Amman holding placards that read: "UNRWA local staff we are on strike."

The strike in Jordan is part of a wider protest by more than 21,000 UNRWA employees at the agency's five areas of operation to press for salary increases and improved working conditions. The agency provides services to 3.5 million refugees from successive Arab-Israeli wars who live in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The UNRWA Jordan Field Office, which was informed of the strike more than a month in advance, according to a staff representative, installed a recorded message on its telephone line which said:

"Due to unforeseen circumstances, most of the staff at the UNRWA Jordan Field Office are not working today, in particular the locally recruited staff who speak Arabic... note that only the English speaking staff is available. As of tomorrow all staff will be available as usual."

Despite warnings of a one-day salary cut the agency's staff said their protests will not end after Tuesday's work stoppage, but will be followed by an open-ended strike on Sept. 28 if the agency does not meet their demands.

But UNRWA said it has little room to meet the strikers' demands, and an indefinite strike would "cause damage to the employees' families."

"We have to find funds from donor nations which is the main problem. We cannot get suffi-



United Nations Relief and Works Agency staff members carrying banners in front of the headquarters of the UNRWA in Amman on Tuesday announcing a strike in all the refugee camps in a bid to push the UNRWA to improve the services in schools and medical clinics in the camps (Photo by Yousef Allan)

cient funds to cover the costs of the services provided," Gunnar Lofgren, director of UNRWA operations in Jordan told reporters.

"There are very few financial possibilities to support the staff request for salary increases across the board."

The agency, burdened with a \$56 million deficit in its \$314 million budget, still faces the tough task of enlarging its donor base and increasing its donor contributions, especially from Arab countries, to prevent any further budget deficits.

Since 1992, UNRWA has run far short in donor contributions in relation to its budget, thus forcing it to adopt cost reduction measures which included suspending recruitment of teachers, cancelling hospitalisation programmes, and reducing international staff by 15 per cent.

Tuesday's strike was prompted by UNRWA's decision to raise the salaries of 10 to 15

senior managers in all areas of operation by 30 to 40 per cent but not those of the majority of its employees, who said their wages have remained unchanged for the past five years.

Although, in his open letter to staff, UNRWA Commissioner General Peter Hansen told the agency's workers that their salaries were higher than those of government employees, the workers argued that they do not receive the same benefits and their salaries have not been consistent with the increase in the cost of living.

"We do not receive the same benefits of early retirement and compensation for termination of employment," an UNRWA staff representative told the Jordan Times. "We'd rather work for the government."

"Our strike... is a legal procedure to pressure UNRWA to give us our rights and to give our people their rights," Reuters news agency Tuesday quoted

staff union leader Abdel-Karim Jouda as telling a rally of almost 1,000 strikers in Gaza City, where all UNRWA schools, clinics and supply centres were shut down except for emergency services.

Staff representatives are scheduled to meet Hansen in Amman on September 23 to try to resolve the problem.

Meanwhile, director of the Palestinian Affairs Department, Ibrahim Badran, told Jordan News Agency, Petra, that a strike is not the ideal way to achieve any demand. He added that the Palestinian Affairs Department in Amman as well as the government support some of the employees' demands and hope that their meeting with Hansen would yield positive results.

But, Badran said nothing can be done to improve UNRWA's services or the status of its employees as long as donor nations are not fully committed to the agency.

Khamenei orders Iran's forces to be ready for action in Afghanistan

Agencies

IRAN'S SUPREME leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei ordered the armed forces Tuesday to be prepared to take action against the Taliban Islamist militia in Afghanistan.

"We have human, Islamic, political and national concerns in Afghanistan — that is to protect our national interests and thwart a threat to the country and the nation," the official IRNA news agency quoted Khamenei as saying in a meeting with commanders of the elite Revolutionary Guards.

"All officials and armed forces should be prepared to firmly and in a timely manner carry out whatever plans and correct decisions the [top] officials have made for the interests of the country," he added.

"We all should be ready to protect our national interests," said Khamenei, who is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Khamenei described the Taliban as a "brutal, dogmatic and ignorant group which relies on foreigners and seeks to serve their interests," according to state radio and television.

"America and certain neighbours of Afghanistan, in a bid to be able to build an oil and gas pipeline and ensure their interests, have unleashed this ignorant tribe on the people of Afghanistan, causing so much pain and suffering and spilling so much blood," he said, referring to Pakistan.

The Iranian leader was apparently referring to reported negotiations between the Taliban and the U.S. company UNOCAL to build a \$2 billion pipeline carrying central Asian gas through Afghanistan to Pakistan.

Iranian officials believe the Taliban was created by Pakistan and the United States to mainly allow energy-rich Central Asia a new access to the sea through Afghanistan and Pakistan, bypassing Iran.

On Monday, Khamenei warned of a

"huge threat" of war in the region over Afghanistan but said he was doing his best to prevent it. He also said the Iranian people were "impatiently waiting" for the government to take action.

Iranian leaders have vowed to avenge the massacre by the Taliban of nine Iranian diplomats and a journalist in an August 8 raid on the Iranian consulate in Mazar-e-Sharif, a city in northern Afghanistan.

They have also condemned an onslaught by the Sunni Muslim militia against the Shiite Muslim community in Bamian, central Afghanistan, which fell to Taliban forces on Sunday.

Iran has deployed 70,000 Revolutionary Guards along its border with Afghanistan and announced plans to stage military exercises there next week involving 200,000 army troops.

Various political, religious and military organisations issued statements after Khamenei's speech Monday pledging support.

The Islamic association of students at Tehran University announced plans to stage a demonstration "in support of the leader's message [and to] condemn the Taliban's ghastly crimes and Pakistan's interference in Afghanistan."

The remains of six Iranian diplomats and the journalist slain by the Taliban returned to Tehran on a Red Cross flight Monday to be met by President Mohammad Khatami and thousands of other mourners.

"You should be certain that we shall defend the honour and territorial integrity of the sovereign state of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the best possible way," Khatami said in a speech.

Iranian leaders have threatened to take revenge against the Taliban, but pledged to avoid hasty decisions.

Many officials, notably moderates, in a country where the memory of the costly 1980-88 war against Iraq is still alive and

painful have called for self-restraint.

"A possible clash with Afghanistan is a trap which is by no means in the interest of the regime," said Tehran's former mayor, Gholam Hussein Karbaschi.

Said Hajarian, a political adviser to Khatami, warned against "any military action or act of vengeance."

"We should definitely solve part of the problem through diplomacy. We should exercise restraint and act with wisdom," he said, quoted by Salam newspaper. "Until we have sufficient information and a complete analysis, we should not resort to anything but peaceful measures."

But MP Marziyeh Dabag demanded tougher measures to "rehabilitate our image."

"We should act firmly against the Taliban. If killing Iranians becomes fashionable, we will not be able to have even a diplomatic presence in other countries," she said.

Another conservative MP Ahmad Nateq-Nouri went further, demanding action against Pakistan, Iran's rival in Afghanistan an ally of the Taliban.

"Before settling accounts with the Taliban, we should have a diplomatic clash with Pakistan. Islamabad has been playing with us all along," he said, quoted by Salam.

Meanwhile, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Sadr said Tuesday that Saudi Arabia does not approve of the Taliban militia's behaviour towards Iran despite being one of its most powerful allies.

"Saudi Arabia has assured [us] that it does not approve of the Taliban's behaviour," Sadr told Lebanon's Al Nahar daily.

"The protection they [the Taliban] are giving to the Saudi dissident Osama Ben Laden raises questions on relations between Saudi Arabia and the Taliban," he added.

The deputy minister said the rising tensions between Iran and the Taliban were "not affecting Iranian-Saudi relations."

Alleged members of illegal party go on trial

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Seventeen men accused of belonging to an illegal political party have begun appearing before the State Security Court and verdicts against some of them are expected within two weeks, a court source said Tuesday.

The source, who asked not to be named, said the 17 defendants, accused of being members of Al Tahrir (Liberation) Party, were among 24 suspects arrested in the past three weeks on the same charges.

"Seven members of the group were released following a few days of detention due to their old age and insufficient evidence against them," the source said.

"The trials of the majority of the 17 defendants have concluded, and the verdicts are expected in less than two weeks," the source told the Jordan Times.

"We are dealing with each case separately, with each taking two [court] sessions on average," he added.

"Some of the 17 were tried for their membership of an illegal group and others for distributing statements," he added.

The source said the statements concerned the party's stand on political issues.

"They did not like anything. They are against the Muslim Brotherhood movement, against the regime, against the Constitution and everything," the source said.

The source declined to name the seven released suspects and those who were tried but said that those arrested are considered the "leadership" of the party.

"Some of them confessed to the charges, others refused to confess, which compelled us to produce the evidence we have against them," the source, who was involved in the interrogations of the suspects, said.

If convicted, the defendants could face sentences ranging from four months to two years in jail, the source said, adding that the case now rests with Colonel

Yusef Faouri, who presided over the trial.

He said the defendants range in age from 25 to 58 years.

Earlier this week, a government spokesman said that only 20 members of the illegal group were arrested and three were later released.

Among those arrested were the group's spokesman Ata Abu Risteh and Saleh Shalabi, according to earlier press reports. Both men had been released five months ago after serving three years in prison for lese majeste.

The arrested also include Walid Shahin, Ali Smadi, Yousif Awadi, Hassan Hamdan, Mohammad Mousa Sabri and Yousif Al Sabatin.

Al Tahrir, which was established in 1950 in Palestine by Taqi Al Deen Al Nabhani and Abdul Qadim Zaloum, advocates the elimination of Arab regimes and their replacement by a caliphate-like system.

Zaloum, who is living in an unknown location outside Jordan, still maintains the leadership of the party.



PALESTINIAN AREAS SEALED: An Israeli inspector checks Palestinian goods Tuesday before they are exported to Israel at the Karni commercial crossing-point in the Gaza Strip. Israel sealed the West Bank and Gaza after threats by Hamas to avenge the killing of its two members Imad and Adel Awadallah last Thursday. The Israeli army said on Monday it would ease up on the closure it imposed on self-rule areas (Reuters photo)

Opposition party blasts higher coordination committee

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — The Higher Committee for Coordination Among the Opposition Parties is expected to discuss next week a communiqué in which the nationalist Haq party accused fellow opposition parties of being ineffective.

The strongly worded communiqué, signed by Haq Secretary General Mohammad Zou'bi, blasted the Higher Committee for "failing to carry out any political initiative vis-à-vis outstanding issues such as the Press and Publications Law, corruption, the recent water crisis, soaring economic hardships, and closer relations with Israel and the U.S. at the expense of inter-Arab ties and against the people's will."

Haq, which is the acronym for the Hizb Al Amal Al Qawmi (National Action Party), "sees the need to review the modus operandi of the Higher Committee, since it has not been up to its responsibilities," the communiqué said.

It reproached the secretaries general of other opposition parties for not participating regularly in the committee's meetings and urged them to meet at least once every fortnight.

It also called for the establishment of a general secretariat of opposition parties led by the six-month rotating chair of the Higher Committee and two deputy chairpersons to "formulate swift responses to government policies."

"If these proposals are not responsibly and seriously studied, then our party will reconsider its participation in the Higher Committee," Zou'bi said.

Opposition party leaders interviewed by the Jordan Times yesterday, however, denied that a dispute was looming among the country's 13 opposition groups, and in return accused Zou'bi of seeking easy publicity.

"He is not saying anything new. In each and every meeting we all criticize ourselves for not being effective enough," one leftist leader said. "The only difference is that we do not go to the press with our internal grievances," he added, requesting anonymity in order, he said, not to "personalise" the issue.

Iranian leader Khamenei orders government to restrict liberal press

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday blasted liberal publications which have flourished under the new government and ordered the authorities to limit their activities.

Khamenei, in a meeting with Revolutionary Guards commanders, accused "certain newspapers" of caving in to a "creeping Western cultural onslaught," accusing them of "targeting people's faith, Islam and the [1979] revolution."

"Some people are looking to the West to see what their newspapers say, so they can say the same thing," he charged in a speech broadcast on state radio.

"We believe in freedom, but freedom is not boundless. Its

limits are those set by Islam. When some want to lead people down the path to lust and faithlessness, this is not freedom, it's treason," Khamenei added.

"I am waiting to see what responsible organs — the ministry of Islamic culture and guidance, the judiciary and intelligence services — want to do, otherwise it is not hard for me to stop such mischievous acts," he warned.

"I already issued a warning at the beginning of this year. This is the second time and I am issuing an ultimatum," the Ayatollah added. "Officials should try and see which newspapers are overstepping their limits."

Khamenei called for making a distinction between "real freedom" from "plots and trea-

son," moves by some to make people disillusioned with the revolution. "This is a revolutionary nation. This is a country of the Koran," he said.

It was the toughest warning issued by Khamenei since the government of President Mohammad Khatami took office in August 1997 on a reformist platform to enhance freedom and make democratic changes.

Moderate Culture Minister Atollah Mohajerani, a close ally of Khatami, has eased press censorship and given more artistic and literary freedom, allowing critics to break long-held taboos.

Some newspapers have given voice to some liberal opposition figures.

The greater tolerance has angered the hardline conserv-

atives, who have pressured the government to curb the new freedom.

But Khamenei also warned Islamists to stop their violent campaign to reverse Khatami's reform programme.

"Everyone should be careful not to break the law under the excuse of defending the religion and the regime," he said. "We don't need such acts. We have law and order. The regime and its officials must be respected."

Early this month, Islamists calling themselves "Hizbolah" assaulted two leading moderate officials — Abdullah Nuori, one of Khatami's vice presidents, and Culture Minister Mohajerani.

The move prompted the president to issue an order to crack down on violent groups.

Sudan rebels claim capture of government garrison

CAIRO (R) — The rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) said Tuesday its forces had captured a garrison in southern Sudan and killed 40 government troops in fierce fighting in the troubled region.

An SPLA spokesman said by telephone from the Eritrean capital Asmara that Al Gabalein garrison, 62 kilometres east of the main southern city of Juba, had fallen on Monday.

He said the rebels had seized a large quantity of arms, including two T-55

tanks, as well as several rocket-propelled grenade launchers and Kalashnikov assault rifles.

The spokesman, Yasser Arman, said there had been no SPLA casualties.

There was no independent confirmation that Gabalein had changed hands and no immediate comment from the government.

Arman also said eight outposts of Liria garrison, about 50 kilometres east of Juba, had been captured Monday and heavy fighting was in progress in the area.

He said 1,000 government soldiers had defected to the rebels along with a 600-strong battalion from the state's Popular Defence Forces south of the Blue Nile.

Arman said the rebels had launched attacks because of intelligence reports that the Islamist government in Khartoum was preparing to assault rebel positions near Juba.

The SPLA has been fighting for the past 15 years to win greater autonomy for the black African, mainly Christian or animist south from the Muslim, Arabised north.

Turkish troops hunt Kurd rebels near Iraqi border

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Thousands of Turkish troops are engaged in a large offensive against Kurdish rebels in the southeast of the country close to the border with Iraq, a military official said on Tuesday.

"Eight terrorists were killed during the fighting last night in Hakkari," the official told Reuters in the southeast regional capital Diyarbakir. He did not say if there were any military casualties.

Special forces, backed by air power, were combing a mountainous area called Farasin in Hakkari province in pursuit of a group of Kur-

dish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas, he said.

Troops killed 16 guerrillas as part of the same offensive on Sunday night in Hakkari.

Four F-16 fighter jets took off from a Diyarbakir base on Tuesday to bomb the region, said the official, who declined to say how many troops were involved.

He said security had been tightened along the border to prevent the rebels from fleeing into northern Iraq, but said troops had not entered the region.

Turkey's fight with the PKK often spills over into mountainous northern Iraq

where the rebels have bases. The Kurdish-held enclave has been outside Baghdad's control since the 1991 Gulf war.

The current anti-rebel push is the biggest since PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan announced a unilateral ceasefire, which took effect on September 1.

The military official said: "This ceasefire is unilateral."

We will continue our operations," Ocalan also called for talks on rebel demands for Kurdish self-rule, but Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz has ruled out the possibility of dialogue.

Palestinians wait for Israeli work permits

GAZA (R) — An Israeli decision to allow 7,000 Palestinian workers back into Israel on Tuesday in an easing of a West Bank and Gaza closure came too late for most to report to their jobs in the morning, a Palestinian official said.

Said Al Mudalal, director general of the Palestinian labour ministry's employment department, said permits which Israel gave his office late on Monday did not arrive in time to enable most of the labourers to get to work on Tuesday.

"All permits are being distributed at the moment and whoever gets one can go to Israel after coordinating with his

Israeli boss," he said.

Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Friday after its forces killed two senior members of the Islamist activist group Hamas near the West Bank town of Hebron.

Hamas has pledged to avenge their deaths.

Israeli authorities said that in addition to the 7,000 Palestinian workers, some 3,000 merchants and businessmen from the West Bank and Gaza would also be granted entry into Israel.

Mudalal said permits were only issued for workers over the age of 28 who have worked continuously in Israel

for the last two years. Israel views such workers as low security risks.

Palestinian chief negotiator Saeb Erekat told Voice of Palestine radio that interim peace accords with Israel stipulate that 130,000 Palestinian workers should be allowed into the Jewish state.

"The Israelis consider it a charity or a gift when they allow more Palestinians into Israel when in fact they still violate the agreements," he said.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that 120,000 Palestinians work in Israel — half of them illegally.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
15:10 "The Adventures of Teddy Ruxpin"
15:30 Children's Programme — Halfway to Cross the Galaxy and Turn Left
16:00 "The Album Show"
17:00 "Doc — Ushuaia"
18:15 "Sea Quest"
19:00 "Le Journal"
19:15 Science Magazine — E-M6
19:30 "News headlines"
19:35 "Comedy — Keeping Mum"
20:00 "Doc — Envoy Special Magazine"
20:30 "Computer Chronicles"
21:10 "Kung Fu"
22:00 "News in English"
22:30 "Chicago Hope"
23:59 "Drama — Bugs"
01:00 "End of T.X."

PRAYER TIMES

04:57Fajr
06:15(Sunrise)Dhuha
12:31Dhuhr
16:01Asr
18:46Maghreh
20:04Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifish, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel.
4624590

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND GALE

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624833/4624811
St. Aftem Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 4771751
Amman International Church Tel. 5665897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811295
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweifish Tel. 5920146
The United Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Language Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771531
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

Following are the highest temperatures expected today in the following areas:
Amman21/33
Aqaba27/39
Deserts30/36
Jordan Valley25/38
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 35, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 24 per cent, Aqaba 34 per cent.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Relative hot weather condi-

tions will prevail throughout the day. Temperatures are expected to drop in the afternoon with westerly light to moderate. On Thursday, temperatures are expected to drop significantly, humidity to rise, and winds to appear at low altitudes. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly active to moderate, and seas calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
Dr. Issam Asmar4890504
Dr. Khalid M'addi5661144
Dr. Mohammad Shuqair 4652693

Dr. Nidal As'ad4751672
Firas pharmacy5661912
Al Asema pharmacy4637055
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730
Yacoub pharmacy4644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660
Nairookh pharmacy4623672
Najib pharmacy5347632
IRBID:
Dr. Fayez Al Qadi281484
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Randa Shahin995710
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre4637111
Civil Defence Department 5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue4630341
Civil Defence Emergency199
Rescue Police 192, 4621111, 4637777
Fire Brigade4617101
Blood Bank4775121
Highway Police5343402
Traffic Police4896390
Public Security Dept.4630321
Hotel Complaints5605800
Price Complaints5661176
Water & Sewage Complaints 489467
Amman Municipality Complaints4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs5661101
Jordan Television4773111

Radio Jordan4774111
Water Authority5680100
J. Electricity Authority 5815615
Electric Power Co.4636381
RJ Flight Information 44-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery5921199
The Islamic, Abdil5661317
Husseini Medical Centre Tel. 5856856
Luzmila4630195
Khalidi Maternity4644281/6
Akileh Maternity4642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362
Malhas, J. Amman.4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani5607071
Shmeisani Hospital5669131
University Hospital5353444
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667277/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muasher 4777101/3
Al-Bashir4775111/26
Army, Marka4891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 5602240/50
Amal Hospital5674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital09/983323
Zarqa National Hospital09/900560
Ibn Sina Hospital09/986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital02/275555
Greek Catholic Hospital02/272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital02/247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 44 (52700) or 44(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:30Damascus (RJ)
09:20Larnaca (RJ)
09:30Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:45Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
15:55 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:30Madrid (RJ)
18:05Istanbul (RJ)
18:05Paris (RJ)

18:40Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
19:00Rome (RJ)
19:10London, Vienna (RJ)
19:15Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)
19:25Frankfurt, Berlin (RJ)
00:15Beirut (RJ)
01:05Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

11:00Sanaa, Hudaidah (TY)
11:30Kuwait (KU)
12:30Jeddah (SV)
13:15Cairo (MS)
14:10Tunis (TU)
15:05Vienna (OS)
16:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (EK)
16:30Algiers (AH)
18:35 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)
18:40Beirut (ME)
19:05Frankfurt (LH)
23:20Istanbul (TK)
23:40Amsterdam (KL)
00:15London (BA)
02:25Athens, Beirut (OA)
05:15Antalia (TK)

DEPARTURES

Royal Wings (RW)
10:20Amman (QAIA)
(Then proceeds to Marka Airport) (RW)
18:00Aqaba (arriving at Marka Airport) (RW)
19:20 Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)
23:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
06:10Larnaca (RJ)
09:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

11:00Rome (RJ)
12:45Istanbul (RJ)
13:25London (RJ)
17:00Tel Aviv (add) (RJ)
20:10Colombo (RJ)
20:35Beirut (RJ)
21:00New Delhi (RJ)
21:05Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
21:10Cairo (RJ)
21:15 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:20Bombay (RJ)
21:45Bahrain (RJ)
22:05Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
01:45Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights:
06:35Larnaca (TY)
07:30Paris (AF)
09:20London (BA)
11:30Ta'iz, Sanaa (TY)
12:45Kuwait (KU)
14:00Jeddah (SV)
14:15Cairo (MS)
15:00Bahrain, Muscat (GF)
15:10Tunis (TU)
15:50Vienna (OS)
17:20Sharjah (AH)
17:20Dubai (EK)
20:00Beirut (ME)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
23:55Beirut (ME)
00:40 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
03:45Beirut, Athens (OA)

Royal Wings (RW)
08:00Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
09:30Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
17:30Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)
22:50Aqaba (from QAIA) (RW)

position
ty blasts
her
ordination
mmittee

Francesca Ciriadi

MAN — The Higher
mittee for Coordi-
Among the Oppos-
Parties is expected to
ss next week a com-
iqué in which the
alist Haq party
sed fellow opposition
ies of being ineffe-

ie strongly worded
muniqué, signed by
Secretary General
hammad Zou'bi, blas-
he Higher Committee
"failing to carry out
political initiative re-
s outstanding issues
as the Press and Pub-
lications Law, corrup-
tion, recent water crisis
and economic hard-
ships, and closer rela-
tions with Israel and the U.S.
in the expense of inter-Arab
and against the peo-
ple's will."

aq, which is the
onym for the Hizb al
al Al Qawmu (National
tion Party), "sees the
rd to review the mod-
erandi of the Higher
mittee, since it has
been up to its responsi-
bilities," the commu-
iqué said.

reproached the sec-
ies general of the
osition parties for
participating regularly
a committee's meet-
d urged them to meet
st once every fortnight.
It also called for the
establishment of a gen-
cretariat of opposi-
ries led by the sit-
onth rotating chair of the
higher Committee and
o deputy chairperson
"formulate and
sponses to government
olicies."

"If these proposals
or responsibility and
seriously studied, then
our party will reconsider
its participation in the
Higher Committee," Zou'bi
said. Opposition party leader
interviewed by the Jordan
Times yesterday, however,
enied that a dispute was
soming among the coun-
ry's 13 opposition
roups, and in some
accused Zou'bi of seeking
asy publicity.

"He is not saying
hing new. In each
very meeting we all
ise ourselves for
eing effective enough
ne leftist leader said
The only difference is
hat we do not go to
ress with our mutual
grievances," he added,
requesting anonymity
order, he said, not to "so-
onalise" the issue.

Other Flights

1:00	Rome (Al)
2:45	Istanbul (Al)
3:25	London (Al)
7:00	Tel Aviv (Jordan)
8:10	Columbo (Al)
8:35	Beirut (Al)
1:00	New Delhi (Al)
1:05	Riyadh (Jordan)
1:10	Caracas (Al)
1:15	Calcutta (Jordan)
1:20	Bombay (Al)
1:45	Bahrain (Al)
2:05	Duba, Moscow (Al)
3:45	Sana'a (Al)

Royal Wings (RW)

08:00	Agaba (RW)
09:30	Agaba (from Akab)
17:30	Tel Aviv (RW)
22:50	Agaba (RW)
23:50	Agaba (RW)

Home News

Troubled seminar opens after one-month delay

By Francesca Ciriadi

AMAN — A troubled seminar that has been at the centre of a row between research centres and the presidents of the country's 13 unions opened yesterday after a postponement of over one month.

The event, organised by Al Urdun Al Jadid Research Centre in cooperation with the German-based Konrad Adenauer Foundation, analyses the role of professional associations vis-a-vis the democratisation process. It was originally scheduled for the end of July, but the professional associations announced a surprise boycott in an 11th-hour decision based on alleged links between the two organisers and Israeli institutions.

"Instead of the projected conference, we are going to have four workshops tackling most of the topics included in the original programme," said Hani Hourani, director of Al Urdun Al Jadid.

Yesterday's workshop, co-chaired by women's rights activist Amal Sabbagh and former Health Minister Zeid Hamzeh, focused on the institutional structure of the associations and democratic procedures as well as women's role within the syndicates.

Three other workshops, focusing on professional ethics and the political role of the associations as a driving force for liberalisation, are scheduled for Sept. 21, 22, and 26.

All workshops will be held on the premises of Al Urdun Al Jadid.

Union leaders, some of whom were scheduled to present papers at the conference according to the original programme, declined to participate amid a growing campaign staged by a narrow but vocal circle of opinion-makers against foreign research centres.

Foreign institutes and their local partners are accused of "spoiling" Arab intellectuals and collaborating with "the Zionist enemy."

"But we decided to hold the event nonetheless," Hourani told the Jordan Times yesterday.

"Not only do we believe it is an important initiative, but we also want to show that we are not giving in to any kind of pressure."



REGENT ATTENDS CEREMONY: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday attends a ceremony in memory of the late Senator Ahmad Tarawneh. Also attending the ceremony were Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, Senate President Zeid Rifal, former prime ministers and senior officials (Photo by Youssef Allam)

Prince Ra'd calls for local support for the physically challenged

AMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, Tuesday opened a two-day seminar on community-based rehabilitation programmes for the physically challenged by calling for extending help to local institutions.

"We have achieved some successes in helping physically challenged citizens to be incorporated into the community thanks to the efforts of local and international agencies and non-governmental groups as well as charity organisations," Prince Ra'd said.

Among these organisations, he said, are Al Hussein Society for the Care of the Physically Disabled, the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency and Muta University.

Community-based rehabilitation

means involving members of society in the rehabilitation process, as society is responsible for meeting the special needs of the physically challenged and helping them become useful members of their community, noted Prince Ra'd.

Some progress in involving the local community in rehabilitating the disabled has been achieved in Mafrqa and in the southern governorates, he said. This progress has encouraged the government to create a national council for the welfare of the physically challenged, said the Prince.

In his address at the opening session, Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mansour said helping the physically challenged conforms to the Royal directives to the government to deal with poverty and unemployment.

He added that full rehabilitation

services are costly, and the state has no alternative but to rely on non-governmental and voluntary organisations.

According to a study by the World Health Organisation, the minister said, 70 per cent of the needs of the physically challenged can be met through the contributions of local communities and through training local voluntary groups.

At the meeting, which was organised by the national council for the welfare of the handicapped in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development and the International Labour Organisation, HRH Prince Firas Ben Ra'd submitted a working paper outlining the general rehabilitation programmes in the Kingdom.

Taking part in the meeting are 50 members affiliated to voluntary organisations and other groups that care for the disabled in the country.

Farmers urged to vaccinate poultry properly against virus

AMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture urged poultry farmers on Tuesday to take extra precautions when vaccinating chickens against the common Newcastle disease, warning that overuse of such medicines could harm the birds.

The ministry also said it shut down two poultry farms because they were hit by the disease, causing heavy losses to investors.

"Farmers should try and use effective vaccines that meet

with our standards," said Ziyad Momani, head of the ministry's pathology ward.

The Newcastle disease, caused by a certain virus that can kill all chickens in any infected farm, can appear at any time of the year under any weather conditions, he added. It is spread by air or through animal feed.

"Ninety-nine per cent of farmers give their chickens vaccines against the Newcastle disease, but in many cases, the disease hit farms and caused heavy

losses because owners or farmers did not stick to ministry rules regarding vaccination," Momani explained.

The Newcastle disease has appeared in Jordan periodically since the 1950s.

"The best way to control the market and guarantee effective vaccines is to pass legislation forcing importers to register the imported vaccine just like medicine," he added. "Veterinary vaccines should be tested on animals before being used by farmers."

Israel facilitates visa application procedures

By Alia A. Toukan

AMAN — The Israeli embassy has announced it was easing visa application procedures following a series of complaints by Jordanians of difficulties in obtaining permits to visit the Palestinian territories and Israel.

The new procedures allow Jordanians to apply as early as March for a single entry visa for the summer, valid for up to six months from the date of issuance, Israeli embassy

spokesperson Ro'ey Gilad said Tuesday.

But he stressed that the visitors will still only be allowed to stay in the Palestinian territories and Israel for two weeks to three months, in line with standing regulations.

Due to the large number of visa applicants during the summer, when as many as 700 people queue up daily at the doors of the embassy, only 350 requests are handled, Gilad said. During "off-season," the embassy handles about 200

requests a day, he said.

Many Jordanians, more than half of whom are of Palestinian origin, still have family members living in the Palestinian territories and Israel, whom they visit regularly. Many complain of long delays at the embassy and of rejection of their visa applications.

According to the Israeli General Bureau of Statistics, there are currently 5,700 illegal Jordanian workers in Israel, which explains why some visa requests are refused, said Gilad.

He also said Jordanians have so far shown reluctance to go through the six tour operators that deal with travel to the Palestinian territories and Israel, which would lessen pressure on the consular section and speed up the application process.

In 1997, 37,000 visas were issued, an increase of 13,000 from the preceding year, Gilad said, declining to comment on the number of applicants rejected in both years. No figures are available for 1995, he said.

Foreign minister leaves for Arab League meeting

AMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Ilah Khatib left Amman Tuesday for Cairo to head Jordan's delegation to the 110th meeting of the Arab League's council, which begins on Wednesday.

In a statement prior to his departure, Khatib said the foreign ministers scheduled to take part in the meeting will review and endorse an agenda prepared for them by the permanent representatives at the Arab League.

Among the main items on the agenda is the Palestine question, and the ministers are expected to review the peace process on the Israeli-Palestinian track. They are also expected to cover the Euro-Arab dialogue, the

establishment of an Arab court of justice, the Libyan dispute with the U.S. and Britain over the Lockerbie affair and the situation in Sudan.

Arab countries on the Mediterranean Sea are expected to hold a separate meeting on the sidelines of the council's session to discuss their relations with European nations, said the minister.

Khatib said he will present Jordan's stand and its call for solidarity among Arab countries in view of current developments in the Arab region.

Khatib is also expected to hold talks with a number of senior Egyptian officials and foreign ministers on inter-Arab cooperation.

Queen, Hillary Clinton inaugurate new Peace Corps headquarters

AMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton inaugurated Tuesday the new headquarters of the Peace Corps in Washington DC, according to a press release.

The Peace Corps was launched by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 as a two-year programme for American volunteers to "serve their country and the cause of peace by living and working in the developing world." The Peace Corps' mission is to promote world peace and friendship by providing volunteers who contribute to the social, economic and human development of countries; to provide a better understanding of Americans among the people whom volunteers serve; as to strengthen Americans' understanding about the world and its people.

In her remarks, Queen Noor quoted the Prophet Mohammad, who said "the best of men are those who are useful to others," noting that "Peace Corps volunteers... give two

years of their lives being useful to others in ways both practical and imaginative."

According to the Queen, Peace Corps volunteers "are currently working all over Jordan in mutually enriching partnerships with government and non-governmental organisations, on a wide range of projects including eco-tourism development, the marketing of traditional crafts, and care for the hearing impaired, orphans and the mentally disabled."

A second group of volunteers will soon begin working with projects ranging from the management of a medicinal herbs enterprise, to research into child health and development and prevention of abuse, the statement said.

Queen Noor noted that "lessons from our region show that peace must be built between peoples. It derives from understanding, trust and a sense of working toward a shared destiny. It arises only out of mutual and equitable exchange of skills, of ideas, of

cultural values."

She emphasised that the important role Peace Corps volunteers are playing by "going where they are invited, bringing open minds, dedication and enthusiasm, living and working side by side with their hosts, and reuniting with new perspectives to share with those at home, are among the best examples of how that peace will be achieved."

Mrs. Clinton in her speech said that it was a privilege to celebrate this occasion with Queen Noor, adding that their Majesties King Hussein and Queen Noor are "two of the finest people you will find anywhere in the world. They are great leaders and strong friends."

Mrs. Clinton expressed her pride in the Peace Corps' World Wise Schools programme, describing it as a unique global education programme that broadens the geographic and cultural horizons of American students through their interaction with

currently serving and returned Peace Corps volunteers. She said that in the past six years, she has been honoured to meet with volunteers on her trips abroad and at the White House, adding that their enthusiasm and dedication inspired her with energy and inspiration.

Jordan represents the 132nd country where Peace Corps volunteers have served since its founding. Volunteers work with the Noor Al Hussein Foundation in eight of its comprehensive development programmes, the Ministry of Social Development, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, the Jordan River Society for Development and the Queen Alia Fund.

Former Peace Corps volunteer and Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, First Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver, and members of Congress attended the inauguration ceremony.

USAID delivers supplies for Zai water plant operation

By Ahmad Khatib

AMAN — The United States Agency for International Development on Monday delivered 42 tonnes of powdered activated carbon to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to ensure "continued safe operation of the Zai Water Treatment Plant," a U.S. embassy statement said yesterday.

Another 100 tonnes of activated carbon will be delivered by the agency to the ministry on Oct. 20.

The carbon shipment is part of a \$750,000 U.S. assistance package which is funding the procurement and delivery of laboratory equipment for the Zai plant, including a new mobile laboratory vehicle delivered to the Water Authority last week, according to the statement.

"Repair work on the plant facilities is the final stage of the assistance package, which will be completed by the end of October," said the statement.

Last week, Japan granted Jordan \$63 million to fund the second stage of expanding the Zai plant to increase its water delivery capacity to 90 million cubic metres per year from 45 mcm per year.

The government declared on Monday that the plant, which was forced to reduce pumping operations during the recent water crisis, will resume full-capacity pumping twice a week starting next Saturday. The plant normally supplies around 40 per cent of Amman's water needs, pump-

ing 120,000 cubic metres of water per hour.

Jordanian officials also announced several new measures to tackle Jordan's water storage problem.

Minister of Water and Energy Hani Mulki said that before chemically purifying water coming to the Zai plant, various kinds of fish are being released in the waterways leading to the plant.

He explained that the fish provide a natural method to clean the water by consuming algae and other suspended particles.

According to Mulki, after necessary repairs were carried out on the Zai plant, algae percentages dropped to 320 per millilitre from the 1100 per millilitre registered during the water crisis, which began in early July.

Meanwhile, Jordan Valley Authority Secretary General Dureid Mahasneh confirmed that the joint Jordanian-Syrian committee will meet next month to discuss the \$400 million Wihdah Dam project on the Yarmouk River, which will provide 135 million cubic metres of water per year.

Mulki said Jordan is working hard to protect the river and cooperating with neighbouring countries regarding this issue.

The minister said he met with Israeli officials to discuss constructing a diversion dam on the Yarmouk to ensure Jordan's water share as stipulated in the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty.

To protect the King Abdullah Canal water, a JD500,000

tender has been given to the Armed Forces to construct a 110-kilometre-long fence on both sides of the canal to protect it against any source of pollution.

Mahasneh said several swimming pools have been built in residential areas near the canal to prevent people from using the canal as a pool.

He added the authority has started, with the cooperation of the Interior Ministry, preventing wastewater tankers from dumping their loads in the Jordan Valley.

The secretary general said the authority has started implementing a Canadian-funded project for treating brackish water for agricultural use.

Mulki said tenders for the Dist-Amman water project, aimed at supplying water from the ancient aquifer to parts of Amman and southern regions of the Kingdom, will be floated at an international conference in Amman.

"The project will go to qualified parties and not necessarily to Iran," he said.

Recent news reports said Iran was interested in funding the Dist-Amman water project on a build-operate-and-transfer basis.

The head of Amman's water management department, Ali Qudab, said to immediately solve citizens' problems, water complaints will soon be able to be sent to the Water Ministry via its computer network.

He added that the management has set up 20 squads to deal with the 170 complaints received each day.

Produce exporters concerned over cargo rate hikes

By Mohammad Ben Hussein

AMAN — Produce exporters are concerned that the Royal Jordanian's intention to raise agriculture cargo prices will harm their business.

"Raising the price would be a disaster for exporters as well as for farmers," complained Khireddine Shukri, head of the Jordan Society for Agricultural Produce.

At RJ, which is expected to announce the decision to hike cargo fees on produce later this week, cargo chief Rizq Farah said the airline is studying the possibility of raising cargo prices as well as providing better services to exporters.

But Shukri expressed strong doubt that the national air carrier would upgrade services.

"RJ, realising that it is the only company to offer cargo services in Jordan, with no second option available to exporters, plans to raise its prices," said Shukri.

RJ owns two Boeing 707 cargo planes.

Jordan annually flies to Europe around 3,000 tonnes of agricultural produce in winter such as green pepper, eggplant, cucumber and other vegetables and citrus fruits.

Other international airlines operating into and out of Amman said they have little or no cargo space to spare.

"In June 1998, Air France stopped operating its connecting flights from Amman to Damascus on its Paris-Damascus route. The airline instead began a direct Paris-Amman-Paris route requiring smaller aircraft with cargo space barely enough for passenger luggage," said Loay Abbasy of Air France.

British Airways' manager in Jordan, Mark Hudson, said "we accept cargo, but we give priority to passenger luggage."

Shukri charged that RJ was seeking to make up for losses in cargo revenues on some of its routes.

According to Shukri, another problem facing exporters is that there are only 14 private refrigerated trucks of international standards available for exporting agricultural produce. The number, he said, is insufficient to handle the quantity of produce Jordan exports to Europe.

Jordanian law prohibits trucks coming from Europe via Jordan to Saudi Arabia from transporting Jordanian produce on their way back to Europe, Shukri complained. As truck owners are protected by law, he said, they do not feel obliged to upgrade their vehicles.

Shukri said the government should either allow European trucks to transport agricultural produce from Jordan to Europe, or force truck owners to upgrade their trucks.

WHAT'S GOING ON

TUNISIAN FILM FESTIVAL
* "The Lost Pigeon's Necklace" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m. (Another film "Planes of Gold" will be screened on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.)

FILM
* "Waterworld" at the American Center, Abdoun on Thursday Sept. 17 at 5:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS
* Photography exhibition entitled "Les Cite's d'Artistes a Paris" at the premises of the Association of the Jordanian Plastic Artists, Jabal Weibdeh, until Sept. 30.
* Paintings by Iraqi artists Ismail Sheikhly, Suzanne Sheikhly, and Khalid Qassab entitled "Pioneers of the Fifth" at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Utheina, until Sept. 21 (Tel. 5536953).
* Paintings by Rula Shukri at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Sept. 30.
* Exhibition of wrought iron furniture by Jordanian artist Salim Al Baidar at Al Baidar Hall, Kan Zarnan village (Tel. 5862531), until Sept. 17.

DARAT AL FUNK SUMMER 98 FESTIVAL
"Summer 98" cultural activities at Darat Al Funtun, Jabal Weibdeh, to last until Sept. 30, include:

EXHIBITIONS
* 50 years of graphic art from Lebanon and works by Jordanian artist Sabal Hazi at the Main House.
* Works by Iraqi artist Samer Usama and by Jordanian artist Said Haddad at the Blue House.
* Installation works by Jordanian artist Samia Zaru at the Byzantine Church.

Kabila and allies in fierce offensive in eastern DRC

KINSHASA (AFP) — Troops backing President Laurent Kabila Tuesday pursued a fierce onslaught against rebels in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), killing many people, several sources here said.

Pro-Kabila soldiers fought rebels on the road from the junction town of Lubutu to the biggest city in enemy hands, Kisangani, a source in the presidential office said, describing the strife as "terrible."

Meanwhile, the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) and troops from allied troops also assaulted the southernmost stronghold of the rebels at Kalemie in the north of mineral-rich Katanga province, independent sources said.

Kabila, who has accused Rwanda and Uganda of invading his country, said Tuesday that he was "extremely disappointed" at the failure of southern African leaders to condemn the aggressors, as he put it.

However, Rwanda's Tutsi defence minister and vice-president, Paul Kagame, accused Kabila of "usurping power" from the alliance of Congolese forces that had backed his own rebellion and of massacring ethnic Tutsis.

"The situation in Congo is an internal contest for power," Kagame said in a statement received by AFP in Nairobi, in which he implied that Kabila had betrayed others in his Alliance of Democratic

Forces for the Liberation (AFDL). Kagame referred to cross-border clashes Monday near the rebel stronghold of Goma, coming the closest yet to declaring that Rwandan troops were involved in the war, but he said Kigali's concern was Rwandan security and the safety of ethnic Tutsis.

In Goma, Tutsi-led rebel soldiers, faced with a sullen population which resents them, were Tuesday pursuing house-to-house searches in search of stray hidden foes, after more than six hours of street fighting Monday, according to AFP correspondents there.

Though no more battles were reported in Goma, "there are violent clashes at Kalemie and many dead," an independent source said in Kinshasa, 1,800 kilometres west of the front lines.

With help mainly from Angola and Zimbabwe, which sent troops, armour and planes, Kabila last month secured the capital and Katanga province, and his forces are now on the move on other fronts.

"We don't have the impression that Kalemie has been seized back by government troops, but this recapture is just a question of time because the rebels are surrounded," the independent source said in Kinshasa.

FAC troops have patrol boats with heavy machine-guns on Lake Tanganyika, while Kalemie's landward side was reportedly cut off.

Meanwhile, allies of Kabila were also said to be moving towards jungle-bound Kisangani.

Lubutu, said to be in government hands, though the rebels have denied this, was a strategic link by land for the insurgents to their headquarters at Goma in North Kivu province.

Officials in Kinshasa said that pro-Kabila troops were not only at the gates of Goma, but also approaching Bukavu, the chief town in South Kivu at the opposite end of Lake Kivu.

Monday, Belgium accused the Tutsi-dominated regime in Burundi of becoming embroiled by sending troops into the Uvira region, south of Bukavu and close to Lake Tanganyika, to back the rebels.

Meanwhile, Kinshasa's FAC troops were reportedly on the left bank of the Congo River close to Kisangani, equipped with heavy artillery. Last week, Ugandan troops were seen by correspondents in the city.

Kabila's displeasure at failing to see Uganda and Rwanda condemned for aggression by a Southern African Development Community (SADC) summit did not change his support on the ground.

Nor did it make any difference to the fact that the gathering in Mauritius ended overnight Monday without any diplomatic progress. South Africa's President

Nelson Mandela, who chaired the SADC meeting, has constantly pressed for a negotiated settlement, but Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe strongly justified armed intervention.

Kabila and his allies refuse even to talk to military or political leaders of the rebels. Kinshasa regimes have not recognised Banyamulenge Tutsis originally from Rwanda as Congolese, and Kabila has played on ethnic tensions in the powderkeg east.

Uganda and especially Rwanda have said no settlement is possible in the DRC without such a meeting.

As peace parleys led nowhere, the Kinshasa government announced on official radio that Kabila had named four generals who served under the late dictator Mobutu Sese Seko to command the offensive in the east.

Marcellin Lukuma Musikani was appointed chief of staff in the Katanga sector, while Mulimbi Mabilo, Bekadja Bakundulo and Ngwala Panzu were respectively made head and deputy head of intelligence forces and chief of logistics.

All had served in the Zairean Armed Forces (FAZ) of Marshal Mobutu, who was toppled in May 1997 by Kabila, when he formed the FAC and renamed Zaire as the DRC. The generals reportedly wrote to Kabila, asking him to let them join the fight against Rwanda and Uganda.



KOSOVO REFUGEES IN SARAJEVO: A Kosovo Albanian girl shows the victory sign Tuesday as her grandmother stands behind her in front of a building damaged during the siege of Sarajevo, currently housing the main international aid agency. They joined demonstrations of Kosovo Albanian refugees demanding assistance from the international community. There are some 7,000 Kosovars who took refuge in Bosnia's capital since clashes erupted in neighbouring Serbia (AFP photo)

Clinton returns to troubles in Washington

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton returned to the White House from New York early Tuesday to find Democratic lawmakers increasingly critical of his efforts to avoid impeachment proceedings in Congress.

The harshest words came from Senate minority leader Tom Daschle, who Monday echoed a statement made a day earlier by the Republican head of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Orrin Hatch.

"I certainly agree with those who have grown impatient with hair-splitting over legal technicalities," Daschle said. "There is a basic understanding of the standard of truthfulness that the president failed to meet," he said, adding that "continued legal jousting serves no constructive purpose."

While not so blunt, House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt also distanced himself from the White House, saying that Clinton "had a wholly inappropriate sexual relationship with a young White House intern [Monica Lewinsky] and failed to be truthful about it."

"We must now consider the implications of his actions, seek the truth and render a judgement," Gephardt said, calling on the "president and the Congress to follow that common sense for the good of the country." Clinton's lawyers are still relying on the president's special definition of sex to deny perjury charges levelled in independent counsel Kenneth Starr's report on the Lewinsky affair.

Sticking to his interpretation of a definition of sexual relations set down in the now dismissed Paula Jones sexual harassment case against him, Clinton has argued that oral sex does not constitute a sexual relationship.

Senator Hatch called the notion "ridiculous" on television Sunday, reflecting a large segment of public opinion.

Daschle and Gephardt, who attended a Democratic fund-raiser with Clinton in New York, did not meet privately with the president, their staff said.

For the time being, the White House seems to be sticking to its battle plans as the House Judiciary Committee could be only days away from ordering an inquiry based on Starr's report — the first step of an impeachment process.

The latest opinion polls showing that a majority of Americans are against Clinton's removal or resignation from office are likely to please the president's advisers.

Ten Cubans charged with spying on U.S. military

MIAMI (R) — U.S. authorities said Monday they had arrested 10 people who ran a sophisticated Cuban spy ring that targeted U.S. military installations and Cuban exile groups for the Communist government in Havana.

"This spy ring was tasked by the Cuban government to strike at the very heart of our national security system and our very democratic process," U.S. Attorney Thomas Scott told a news conference, announcing the arrests of the 10 alleged spies.

"This group sought to infiltrate [Southcom, the United States' military headquarters in Miami] for the southern hemisphere, which they described in their communications as a priority objective in the Miami area," he said.

Scott added the alleged spy cell had planted an agent at the U.S. Navy's Boca Chica Naval Air Base in Key West.

At least one other intelligence agent allegedly posed as an FBI informant to pass false information to that agency, while others joined Cuban exile groups opposed to the government of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

One even piloted a boat in a flotilla toward Cuban waters organised by the Miami-based anti-Castro Democracy Movement.

Another was a member of Brothers to the Rescue, the exile group at the centre of an international furore in February 1996 after Cuban MiGs shot down two of its planes, killing four people.

Authorities said Southcom was not compromised by the group. They declined to further discuss the impact of its activities.

The 10 suspects, eight men and two women, were arrested over the weekend in and around Miami. Handcuffed together and wearing prison denials, all 10 appeared before a federal magistrate Monday.

They were ordered jailed without bond on charges of acting as agents of the Cuban government, conspiring to defraud the U.S. government and conspiring to gather and deliver defence information to aid a foreign government.

If found guilty, they would face life imprisonment and fines of up to \$750,000. The FBI detailed the alleged spying activities in a 27-page

criminal complaint resulting from three years of investigation.

The arrests underlined "the true nature of the terrorist state in Havana," said U.S. Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart, a Florida Republican.

The spy ring sent information back to Cuba using computer equipment displayed as FBI evidence at the news conference.

Through its three lead agents, who communicated directly with the Cuban government, the group also received instructions about its activities, according to court papers.

"To say the least... their operation was sophisticated," Scott said. Among the evidence the FBI displayed was an Alabama death certificate in the name of Randolph Williams, which agents said might have been used to create a false identity.

"In our lifetime we definitely never will see again three [Cuban espionage] officers being detected in one operation."

This is a significant blow to the Cuban government and their efforts to come into this country and conduct intelligence activities," Pesquera said.

The Cuban government said the first it had heard of the alleged spy ring was through media reports, and did not want to give an immediate reaction.

"We only know what has come out through the wire service reports," Foreign Ministry spokesman Alejandro Gonzalez told Reuters. "This is a subject in which the U.S. authorities are the ones involved, and it is not responsible to comment on a subject we do not know about."

Rumours that Castro was spying in Miami have circulated among the city's Cuban exiles for years. A self-proclaimed Cuban spy, Juan Pablo Roque, surfaced in Havana just after the 1996 shooting down of two Brothers to the Rescue planes, announcing that he had infiltrated the group as an agent of the Cuban government but denying a link to the MiG attack.

Jose Basulto, president and founder of Brothers to the Rescue, said the arrests had something to do with the downing of the planes. He attended the court hearing and said he recognised one defendant, Rene Gonzalez, who was identified in court as an unemployed flight instructor.

Hector Pesquera, special agent in charge of the Miami office of the FBI, declined to comment on any link between the weekend's arrests and the attacks on the Brothers to the Rescue planes. Democracy Movement leader Ramon Saul Sanchez said Gonzalez had worked with his organisation, helping plan air support for its memorial flotillas. He said group members had been suspicious of Gonzalez, "but I cannot say he was a spy."

"There's nothing damaging he can know that can harm us," Sanchez said. "We always screen people. The CIA, the FBI, the KGB have been infiltrated so we cannot prevent it."

In court, seven of the suspects said they could not afford to hire attorneys, and U.S. Magistrate Judge Barry Garber ordered public defenders to be appointed.

One defendant, Antonio Guerrero, told the court he worked at the U.S. Naval Air Station Key West at Boca Chica, in the Florida Keys, but did not elaborate on what his job was.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Primakov drafts centrist into new cabinet

MOSCOW (AFP) — Yevgeny Primakov forged a Communist-centrist cabinet coalition and began drafting an emergency budget Tuesday as Russia's new premier sought to tackle the country's stricken economy head-on. Primakov appointed Our Home Is Russia (NDR) faction leader Alexander Shokhin as a deputy premier in charge of the key financial portfolio after meeting with President Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin. Shokhin, 46, who joins the Communist-duo of First Deputy Prime Minister Yury Maslyukov and Central Bank chief Viktor Gerashchenko in the new Russian government, quickly warned that rescuing the country's ruined finances will not be simple. Primakov was due to meet the heads of leftist factions in parliament later Tuesday to discuss further appointments. Interfax news agency reported, Shokhin served as economics minister in 1994 before joining the then-premier Viktor Chernomyrdin's NDR faction in parliament.

Russian nuclear strikers take hostages

MOSCOW (AFP) — Hunger-striking employees at a nuclear power plant in far eastern Russia took three officials hostage Tuesday demand full payment of wages arrears, the ITAR-TASS news agency reported. The protesters at the plant in Primorsky seized the director, deputy director and chief engineer after they arrived for talks. The strikers said they would be released once all wage arrears had been settled. At another plant in the neighbouring region of Khabarovsk, over 350 employees also staged a sit-in Tuesday in protest over unpaid wages, reported the agency, citing union leaders. Nikolai Fedorov, head of trade unions at the plant, put the amount of unpaid wages for state sector employees at "over 130 million rubles."

Viagra authorised for sale in EU

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Viagra, the anti-impotence drug that has generated unprecedented demand around the world, was authorised for sale in the 15 European Union countries Tuesday, officials said. EU Industry Commissioner Martin Bangemann signed the authorisation in Strasbourg, Bangemann's signature was the final step in a six-month approval procedure during which the drug was cleared for sale by the European Medicines Evaluation Agency and by a committee of experts from the 15 EU countries. The EU's authorisation was conditional on Viagra being sold with an explanatory note warning of possible side-effects. These include headaches, hot flashes, indigestion, panic attacks, vision problems — and the possibility of prolonged and painful sexual arousal.

Italian police arrest top Mafia mastermind

PALERMO (R) — Sicilian police Tuesday arrested leading Mafia figure Mariano Troia, one of Cosa Nostra's most notorious backroom boys and one of Italy's 30 most wanted criminals. "He had been on the run for six years, but finally we managed to get him," Palermo police chief Antonio Manganelli told Reuters. Troia, 65, was captured at dawn when police stormed his hideout on the outskirts of Palermo. Manganelli said. Prosecutors believe Troia is right-hand-man to Bernardo Provenzano, who is considered to have taken over as Sicilian Mafia boss after the arrest of Totò "The Beast" Riina in 1993. Troia is suspected of being one of the masterminds behind the 1992 killing of Italian member of the European Parliament Salvo Lima, working behind the scenes for his Mafia masters for years.

Congressman shot to death in Colombia

BOGOTA (AFP) — A congressman for the Colombian opposition Liberal Party was shot to death late Monday while driving home in Medellin city, 225 kilometres northeast of here, the local police chief said. Jorge Humberto Gonzalez, 48, was shot by two unidentified gunmen from a passing motorcycle while he was waiting at a traffic light with his wife and chauffeur. Medellin Metropolitan Police Chief Ramon Jaimas said. Gonzalez was taken to a nearby hospital where he died before doctors could operate. Hospital sources said the lawmaker took four bullets to the head. His wife and chauffeur were unharmed in the attack, the sources added. Gonzalez is the fifth Liberal lawmaker from Antioquia department to have been assassinated since 1990.

Albanian opposition stage peaceful rally despite ban

TIRANA (AP) — Albanian opposition protesters defied a ban and held a peaceful rally Tuesday, while the government ordered armed opponents to turn in their weapons in an effort to quell non-violence after two days of riots.

Opposition figures, angry over the assassination last week of a popular opposition party figure, touched off a wave of unrest reminiscent of the nationwide anarchy that lasted for months in 1997 and sent refugees flooding into Italy, Greece and other European countries.

In a nationally televised address, Prime Minister Fatos Nano said the government's patience was running out and it would not "wait endlessly for all weapons to be taken out" of the headquarters of his rival, former President Sali Berisha.

Nano guaranteed the safety of Berisha and his Democratic Party followers. Nano also said he was willing to consider "in principle" any resolution to the crisis, presumably including his own resignation — as the opposition has demanded — but insisted the opposition first surrender any weapons. "There is no time," Nano said.

Berisha exhorted demonstrators to remain peaceful, but defiantly announced a Wednesday rally unless Nano resigned. Protesters waved the two-fingered victory sign.

The weekend assassination of Azem Hajdari, a former student leader who helped bring down Albania's Communist government set off two days of riots. Police said at least three Berisha supporters were killed and 14 wounded Monday when government forces launched a counter attack and swiftly regained control of key facilities: Parliament, the state television and radio building and Nano's office.

Despite Tuesday's ban on demonstrations, about 3,000 of Berisha's supporters rallied peacefully in the main Tirana Square.

Berisha, a 53-year-old heart surgeon, warned Interior Minister Periklita Teta to rescind a shoot-without-warning order or "bear all responsibility for the consequences."

A tank was parked in front of Democratic Party headquarters Tuesday, apparently taken over by opposition forces during riots the day before. About a half

dozen Berisha supporters armed with submachine guns were nearby.

Dozens of police cars surrounded the protesters on central Skanderbeg Square, lights flashing and sirens howling. The cars and several police vans were filled with officers carrying submachine guns and wearing stocking masks.

In southern Albania, police reported overnight shootouts between gunmen and border guards at the Kakavia crossing to Greece. They said the attackers, from the nearby Albanian city of Gjirokastra, wounded three people.

U.S. and European diplomats were seeking to negotiate a peaceful end to the crisis. Many fear the unrest could spread, further complicating the situation in the neighbouring Serbian province of Kosovo, where ethnic Albanian rebels are fighting for independence.

President Rexhep Meidani was also trying to mediate a settlement. Government sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Meidani raised the possibility of Nano's resignation during a meeting with the prime minister late Monday.

Kohl back on campaign trail

BONN (AFP) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl resumed his election campaign Tuesday buoyed by signs he is closing the gap on the opposition after a big win for his coalition partner in a key regional vote.

With polling day on Sept. 27 now less than two weeks away, an election for so long seen as a sure-fire win for the opposition Social Democrats (SPD) has suddenly developed into a real battle.

Pollsters and analysts are busy updating their figures to account for a "mood swing" among voters in favour of Kohl's Christian Union coalition that could yet see him winning a record fifth mandate.

Kohl was scheduled to appear at campaign rallies in Randsburg and Luebeck, in the northern and largely rural state of Schleswig-Holstein.

He received a big boost Sunday when the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister to his Christian Democratic Union (CDU), won 52.9 per cent of the vote in state elections there.

Although a CSU win was always likely — it has ruled alone in the wealthy southern state for 36 years — the margin was greater than expected, sending the SPD plunging to

28.7 per cent, below their 30 per cent of four years ago.

Kohl and his team predictably went straight on the offensive to forecast success in the national vote, while SPD leaders played down the significance of the Bavaria vote as a regional affair.

But Klaus-Peter Schöppner of the Emnid Polling Institute said the mood in the country was changing in favour of the government.

"The mood is turning in favour of the Union," he said. "It used its last chance at the regional election in Bavaria. The Bundestag election could be very close."

His polls showed that two thirds of people do not think Schroeder will be able to push through his "New Centre" message.

"Voters have never been so unsure if they will get the policies they vote for," he warned. An Emnid poll published Monday gave the CDU/CSU 38 per cent, one percentage point up from last week's 37, and the SPD down one to 41 per cent.

A political analyst, who did not want to be named, said he could see the CDU defying all the polls so far and finishing ahead of the SPD on election day.

He pointed to a high number of undecided voters in the east, saying Kohl may pick up votes there in the final days of the campaign, and the effect of the Bavaria result could also translate into a small swing to the Union.

On the other hand the environmental Greens were continuing to take votes from the SPD, he added.

It meant the CDU/CSU could end up as the largest group in the Bundestag, the lower house of parliament, the analyst said.

A poll of polls in Die Welt closing the gap on the SPD from 4.5 per cent four days ago to 3.5 per cent.

Kohl's SPD rival Gerhard Schroeder, for his part, Monday dismissed the Bavarian result as a one-off and said the fight would go on. Taking up a theme also expressed in many newspapers, he said people there had voted CSU because it was different from Kohl and Governor Edmund Stoiber was immensely popular.

However, he was forced to admit the SPD had suffered a setback, especially after basking much of its Bavarian campaign on a "CSU=Kohl" theme.

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Police round up Anwar's colleagues'

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Malaysia's ousted deputy prime minister said his personal secretary was detained Tuesday as part of a mounting police crackdown on his colleagues. "They're gradually picking away people," said Anwar Ibrahim, claiming a third of his close associates have been arrested and coerced "to admit certain things — treason, selling government secrets or whatever." Anwar said that police arrested Mohammad Ahmad, his former private secretary at the Finance Ministry, early Tuesday morning and he had not been heard from since. Anwar also said that another private secretary, Azmin Ali, had been notified Tuesday of his imminent arrest. Anwar's adopted brother, Sukma Dermawan, was detained last week. The government has not taken action against him personally, he said, because it is preoccupied with the Commonwealth Games and the arrival of Britain's Queen Elizabeth II on Sept. 21. "I believe their timing will be perfect," he said of his own expected arrest. "They will wait until her majesty the queen leaves."

Cambodian capital calm after agreement

PHNOM PENH (AP) — Ending a string of bloody anti-government protests, opposition supporters Tuesday heeded their leaders' calls not to demonstrate after Cambodia's rival political parties agreed on steps to end the country's political crisis. The capital was quiet after more than a week of daily marches by thousands of people accusing strongman Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party of using fraud to win parliamentary elections held on July 26. The pro-democracy protests, which also demanded Hun Sen's ouster, were harshly put down by well-armed riot police. At least four people were killed and dozens injured. Prince Norodom Ranariddh, head of the opposition FUNCINPEC party, appealed to demonstrators Monday to call off more protests after the ruling party and its two main rivals reached a tension-easing agreement.

'783 Myanmar opposition detained'

YANGON (R) — Myanmar's opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) said Tuesday that 783 of its members had been detained by the military government since late May. "Two elected representatives and 79... members of the NLD were detained between Sept. 11 and Sept. 14, bringing the total number to 783," the NLD's central executive committee said in a statement obtained by Reuters. The statement said the 783 detainees consisted of "196 elected representatives and 587 other members." The government has said the detained NLD members are "invited guests" who are staying at government guest houses at the authorities' request to promote peace and stability in the country. But the NLD rejected this and condemned the military's treatment of its members. "The authorities are unlawfully detaining NLD members but they do not admit doing so," the NLD statement said.

Seven die in Turkmen killing spree

ASHGABAT (R) — Seven people died in the former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan Saturday after a group of army deserters went on a killing and kidnapping spree, an interior ministry spokesman said Tuesday. President Saparmurat Niyazov, who rules his gas-rich but cash-strapped desert nation of four million with a fist of iron, said he would set up a special commission to investigate the incident. The spokesman said that five soldiers, serving in the town of Kazandzhik in the west of the Central Asian state, raided an arms depot and stole five automatic weapons, 20 pistols, 700 cartridges and three bullet-proof vests. As they drove along the road leading southeast to the town of Kizyl-Arvat, they opened fire on a passing car, killing two passengers. They then took seven civilians hostage in the village of Gaganan, around 100 km west of the capital Ashgabat.

Pakistani militants burn Shiite mosques

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Scores of rampaging Sunni Muslim militants poured kerosene oil on a Shiite Muslim mosque as well as three neighbouring houses and set them on fire in the latest spate of violence between rival Islamic groups, police said Tuesday. No one was injured. Militant Sunni Muslims belonging to Sipah-e-Sahaba, or Guardians of the Friends of the Prophet, attacked the Shiite mosque in Wah Town, some 40 kilometres west of Islamabad on Monday night, local police officials said. The militants, shouting slogans against Shiites, surrounded the mosque before setting it on fire, police said. Three houses were also set ablaze. The mosque and the houses were partially destroyed in the attack, they said. The attack came a day after four gunmen shot and killed a Sunni Muslim leader and three of his companions on a highway outside Islamabad.

China agrees to talks on Taiwan meeting

TAIPEI (AP) — In a move warmly greeted in Taipei, China said Tuesday it will host Taiwan's top negotiator next month and agreed to preliminary talks on an agenda for the watershed visit. Koo Chen-Fun will visit Beijing and Shanghai on Oct. 14-19, and may hold a news conference and meet with Taiwanese investors as requested. China's Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Straits said in a letter. In a breakthrough for Taiwan, China agreed for lower level officials of the two sides to meet beforehand over the details of Koo's visit. China had earlier snubbed Taiwan's requests for such talks, fuelling speculation here that it intended Koo's visit to be merely a courtesy call. Premier Vincent Siew praised the letter as a "friendly response."



Soldiers grab an Indonesian activist Tuesday in Jakarta September a group of Muslim activists tried to reach the presidential office to demand the release of one of their leaders. Protests by students and workers and outbreaks of rioting and looting have been on the increase in recent weeks as the country's descent into poverty worsens (Reuters photo)

Indonesia to question Suharto on wealth

JAKARTA (AFP) — The Indonesian government will question former president Suharto over his wealth this week, the head of a presidential advisory board said Tuesday.

"In the next one or two days... within this week, there will be a team that will investigate former president Suharto," Arnold Barumuli, the head of the Supreme Advisory Council, said.

President B.J. Habibie had ordered the questioning in response to six recommendations made by the council. Barumuli said.

"One of the recommendations was that the president investigate former president Suharto because the latter has already said that he was clean," he said.

Suharto, speaking on the private television Pindidikan Indonesia station on Sept. 6, denied allegations he had accumulated a fortune worth billions of dollars during his 32 years in power and said he had not a "single cent" abroad.

The personal disclaimer came as calls mounted here for a full probe into Suharto's wealth and after the U.S. Forbes magazine estimated in July he was worth four billion dollars.

Barumuli declined to give details on the team, saying only it could be composed of members of the attorney general's office or the police or both and the questioning could take place at Suharto's residence.

"Speaking as a former state attorney myself, the investigation can be held in a house. What is important is that there is a report of the investigation," Barumuli said.

He added the decision was not a "spontaneous reaction" of Habibie towards the recommendation of the council but "has been long been considered" by the president.

U.N. human rights chief defends China visit as important step

BEIJING (AFP) — U.N. human rights chief Mary Robinson Tuesday defended her first visit to China saying it was an important step toward shaping changes in the Communist country and that an approach that largely ignored dissidents was a necessary sacrifice.

China is "for the first time formally envisaging seeking international human rights assistance... a psychological barrier has been broken," she told a packed media briefing after meetings Monday with President Jiang Zemin and Vice Premier Qian Qichen.

Robinson played down accusations that she sidestepped the country's dissidents, saying her organisation was working hard at a realistic approach that had only just begun.

"Finger-pointing is not enough," she said. "It's necessary if you [the U.N.] want to make a change in the country to work through the organs in a country."

Tuesday was the last day of the 10-day visit, the first to China by a U.N. human rights commissioner.

Robinson revealed that Qian assured her Beijing would next month sign the International Convention on Civil and

Political Rights, which will require China to permit freedom of expression, a free press and to regularise police powers once ratified.

He had said earlier this year that China would sign the treaty in the autumn.

Robinson said the vice premier showed he "was aware that this has very far-reaching implications for the system of administration of justice."

China has already signed the sister Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its parliament is making earnest efforts toward ratification, she said.

Robinson conceded that there was no guarantee that China — whose constitution already "guarantees" wide-ranging political freedoms — would put such treaties into practice.

"That's why it's important to engage in a process," she said, adding that full implementation hinged on continued contacts. "It's important that I come back... that there is follow-through."

Under a memorandum of intent on technical co-operation signed last week, Beijing and Robinson's office will begin a long series of exchanges mainly aimed at strengthening rights

protection by rule of law.

Robinson said Jiang and Qian had welcomed a return visit, adding: "I would hope to be back within the year."

Foreign ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao hailed Robinson's efforts, saying: "The High Commissioner has... established a very good working relationship with the Chinese side."

"The Chinese side responded very positively to the suggestions of the High Commissioner," he added.

But Robinson said she raised sticky political issues with the Chinese leaders, urging specifically a review of the cases of all those still detained for their role in the 1989 pro-democracy movement that ended with the Tiananmen massacre.

According to overseas human rights groups, more than 3,000 remained behind bars for "crimes" related to the weeks of demonstrations that year.

She also said she had made inquiries about the child chosen by the exiled Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of Tibet's other main spiritual leader, the Panchen Lama.

China has been accused of imprisoning the Tibetan boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and

his family after enthroning its own candidate as the Panchen Lama in his place in mid-1995.

Robinson said she told Jiang it was important that he meet the Dalai Lama by the end of the century but the president gave no specific reply.

The Dalai Lama, reviled by China as a separatist villain, has headed a Tibetan government-in-exile in India since fleeing Lhasa in 1959.

Robinson's arrival in the country sparked an outpouring of open letters and appeals from dissidents, most asking for her help in individual cases of political oppression.

The U.N. rights commissioner protested strongly at one incident in which a dissident's wife was dragged away and beaten by police after she attempted to meet Robinson at a Beijing hotel last Wednesday. Tuesday Robinson said she regretted that many people who wanted to make contact with her were unable to do so.

She stressed, however, that the important thing was establishing a process in China that might tackle more ambitious goals down the road.

"I can't work miracles. I must work through a system that the international community has established," she added.

N. Korea boasts of satellite launch after U.S. admits error

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea Tuesday boasted the world no longer doubted it had launched a satellite after the United States reversed its earlier claim that the unpredictable state had fired a new medium-range ballistic weapon.

South Korea, however, has declined to officially admit that North Korea launched a satellite on Aug. 31, saying a final verdict would likely be reached in talks between Seoul, Washington and Tokyo by this weekend.

Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said it "has already been widely known to the world" that what North Korea launched on Aug. 31 was a rocket to put a satellite into orbit.

"Accordingly, there is nothing doubtful about this," it added in a dispatch monitored here.

The remarks came one day after U.S. State Department spokesman James Rubin Monday said "North Korea did attempt to orbit a small satellite but the satellite failed to achieve its orbit."

But the United States struck to its position that whatever the nature of the launch, it represented a threat to regional security.

A senior government official told AFP the U.S. about-turn was expected as it could no longer afford to

remain silent over North Korea's launch.

"The U.S. probably knew about the satellite long time ago. But to save face, it couldn't admit it right away," the official said.

"Now the issue is focused on not what the North Koreans launched but its capability, which is a threat to us and this region," he said.

A government source said South Korea would continue to stand by Japan and the United States if they stick to their positions and push for action against Stalinist North Korea from the U.N. Security Council (UNSC).

"Japan is having a difficult time with China opposing any UNSC protest. Now that the U.S. has admitted it was a satellite, and not a missile, Japan's case is weakened," the source said.

"But if Japan decides to push for action, we will stand behind its decision," the official said. "We are also concerned about the fact that North Korea has such technology."

Senior officials from South Korea, the United States and Japan are meeting in Washington to discuss North Korea in general and its recent launch.

China has continued to resist Japanese and Western pressure to agree to a Security Council protest over the firing of the rocket,

even after all other 14 delegations agreed to a formal reaction.

The Chinese delegation is objecting on the grounds that the missile was not a matter for the Security Council to discuss.

North Korea Tuesday also blasted Japan for attacking its citizens living there over the launch.

"As is known, such words as 'missile launching test' and 'unpardonable act' are continuously ringing out among Japanese politicians after an artificial satellite was launched in the DPRK [North Korea]," the KCNA said.

It said since there were no doubts it launched a satellite, there was "no reason for Japan to hurl slanders at this."

North Koreans living in Japan last week said they had been targeted with a campaign of murder, rape and kidnapping threats since Pyongyang's launch.

The firing prompted Japan to halt aid to North Korea and suspend limited official and commercial contacts between the two countries, which have no diplomatic ties with each other.

Tokyo also pulled out of signing a key deal over cost-sharing for the 1994 Geneva agreement in which Pyongyang agreed with Washington to freeze its suspect nuclear programme.

Protesters hold march, rallies to oppose Philippine-U.S. accord

MANILA (AP) — Hundreds of activists, some with slogans painted on their bodies, marched and held rallies Tuesday to oppose an accord that would allow U.S. troops to conduct war exercises in the Philippines.

The protests in Manila and nearby provinces were held a day before planned nationwide rallies marking the 1991 rejection by the Philippine Senate of a treaty to extend the American military presence in this former U.S. colony.

The protesters oppose the Visiting Forces Agreement, which was signed early this year by U.S. and Philippine officials but still must be ratified by the Philippine Senate.

The accord would allow large-scale U.S. and Philippine military exercises and provide legal protection for U.S. soldiers on duty in the country.

In the Makati financial district, about 300 demonstrators marched toward the U.S. Embassy in Manila, snarling traffic.

The marchers were led by seven protesters with letters painted on their bodies which together read "Junk VFA." The demonstrators, belonging to the New Patriotic Alliance, planned to hold a protest in front of the U.S. Embassy, which was closed Tuesday ahead of the demonstration.

Another group, the Movement for National Democracy, demonstrated at former U.S. military bases in Olongapo and Angeles cities, both north of Manila.

Sonia Soto, a leader of the movement, said security guards at the former Clark Air Base near Angeles forced them back with truncheons when they tried to approach a gate to hang a notice saying Americans were not wel-

come to return to the facility.

About 20 of 700 protesters were hurt in the melee, Soto said.

The former U.S. base has been converted into an industrial and tourism centre.

"The pullout of American troops should be irreversible. We're warning the public that the government is laying the ground for their return," Soto said.

Critics say the pact would limit the Philippine government's right to prosecute American soldiers who commit crimes in the country, and would also promote prostitution and drag the Philippines into conflicts between the United States and its enemies.

President Joseph Estrada says the country needs the accord and a close military alliance with the United States because of the Philippines' poorly equipped armed forces.

Indian PM attacks global nuclear regime

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee Tuesday attacked the global nuclear regime as "highly distorted" and alleged it blocked transfers of technology even for peaceful uses.

"It is unfortunate that the international nuclear regime today is highly distorted," he said while opening an atomic reprocessing plant 60 kilometres from the southern city of Madras.

"On the one hand, the traditional nuclear weapons states want to keep the destructive power of nuclear technology in their own hands and resist nuclear disarmament."

"On the other hand, they restrict the enormous benefits of peaceful nuclear energy from reaching humanity at large which needs it most," the Press Trust of India quoted him as saying.

Vajpayee said the opening of the atomic reprocessing plant was "an important milestone in India's nuclear power programme."

India has repeatedly attacked the world's established nuclear powers since it attracted international criticism for testing nuclear weapons in May, sparking a tit-for-tat response from neighbouring Pakistan.

Until the May tests, New Delhi had maintained that its nuclear programme was for peaceful purposes. India first tested nuclear weapons in 1974.

Vajpayee, in southern India to address the first joint rally of his Hindu nationalist-led coalition government, said: "India deplores the hurdles placed in the area of technology transfer."

The prime minister also again justified the May nuclear tests, which triggered fears of war with Pakistan and led to sanctions from the United States and Japan.

"We have made our stand on this matter very clear and I am happy to note that the rest of the world is rapidly beginning to appreciate India's perspective," he said.

He lavished praise on India's army of nuclear scientists.

"We will do everything within our means to help you realise the national mission to develop nuclear technology, which is so important for India's development."

The atomic reprocessing plant at Kalpakkam is the third such facility set up in India in the past 50 years.



FARMERS DEMONSTRATE IN SEOUL: Angry South Korean farmers fight riot policemen Tuesday as they try to hold an anti-government rally in Seoul. Thousands of farmers protested against the government's agriculture policy, demanding that part of their debts be written off (AFP photo)

Jordan Times

Chairman of the Board of Directors
Abdel Salam Tarawneh

Vice Chairman & Director General
Mohammad Amad

Executive Editor
Abdullah Hassanat

Responsible Editor
Elia Nasrallah

Editorial and Advertising offices
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman

Telephones: 5684311, 5699634, 5667171, 5603585

Facsimile, Editorial: 5696183, Advertising: 5693337

E-mail: jtimes@go.com.jo

Web Site: <http://www.access2arabia.com/jordantimes/>

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times Advertising Department

War signals

THE FACTIONAL war between Sunnis and Shiites in Afghanistan is threatening to explode into a major regional armed conflict unless contained soon. With the Taliban movement consolidating their gains against the beleaguered Shiites, Iran is sending war signals that it may intervene on the side of the Shiites, especially after the killing of a number of its diplomats in Mazar-e-Sharif a few weeks ago at the hands of forces loyal to the Taliban leader. Taliban is accused by Iran of behind the military successes of the Taliban and suggests that oil and gas are the real spoils of the war for which the Taliban leader is waging his offensive. Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned a few days ago that a "huge threat" of a regional war is imminent. The odds are in favour of these fears to materialise.

It appears that securing Afghanistan as an access to the sea for oil and gas supported by Central Asian countries is behind the conflict. There are also reports that Afghanistan itself could indeed be an oil and gas rich country, making it a major prize for international energy conglomerates. While the stakes could be high for oil companies and some countries, the stakes are higher for the Muslim World. For starters, the Islamic World must not continue in its slumber. When Muslims shed their own blood along narrow sectarian lines for the vested interests of foreigners, the Organisation of Islamic Conference should be in the forefront of all international efforts to stop the fratricidal fighting immediately and mediate between the Taliban and its opponents.

Pakistan and Iran should also hold an emergency meeting on the conflict. The worst thing that could happen now is an escalation of the war over Afghanistan into a major armed conflict between Islamabad and Tehran. The wounds and the bitter memories of the eight-year Iran-Iraq war will endure and the Islamic World can ill-afford another conflict between Muslim factions in the region. This is the time for the Muslim World to unite, not to wage war against one another.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

At Ra'i's Raja Elissa supported Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi in his decision to cancel the Ministry of Arab Unity established five years ago, after it proved to be impractical. Libya wants to emphasise its African identity more than its Arabic. Qadhafi blamed Arab countries for being selfish on issues harming their brothers. He said African countries were more united — enough to break the air embargo on Libya. The Arab people are fed up with the shiny slogans released by their leaders about Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine, said the writer. Arab leaders nowadays proclaim their support unity, while in fact they are not interested in anything except their own self-interests, said Elissa. The writer lashed out at the Arab leaders for not being genuine and honest with the Palestinian people.

At Ra'i's Fahed Fanek praised Minister of Information, Nayef Judeh, for sacking the director of the Press and Publications Department, Bilal Tal, and appointing Iyad Qattan, who is an intellectual journalist. He claimed that changing the director of the PPD does not mean changing the Press and Publications Law, but changing the majority of the people behind it. The problem of the law is the general terms it consists of, and the way these terms may be used. Fanek charged that applying the law is more important than passing it. The government says it will be lenient in applying the law, an individual which have made relations between the government and the media better, said the writer. The government has realised that antagonising the media is not a good thing, because force does not work any more. The "global village" that our world has become, Fanek claimed.

Washington Watch

Arab American responsibilities

Dr. James J. Zogby

ARAB AMERICANS have a full political agenda for fall 1998. As the community continues to advance into the U.S. political mainstream, it is required to operate on several fronts simultaneously. Later this month, for example, Arab American leaders from a number of organisations will convene a leadership summit to address Arab American foreign and domestic policy issues and review plans for the 1998 elections. High on the agenda for this meeting will obviously be concern over U.S. Middle East policy. The lack of U.S. leadership in the peace process, the continuing concern with Iraqi sanctions and the recent U.S. bombing of Sudan have all contributed to a growing alienation from the United States in the Arab World.

Arab Americans are deeply troubled by this fact and will seek to present a unified voice in warning the Administration of the dangers to U.S. allies and interests and to regional stability if this situation persists.

Two congressional initiatives sponsored by Arab Americans will also be assessed by the leadership meeting: a congressional letter calling on the administration to develop a new policy to address the humanitarian concerns in Iraq resulting from the economic sanctions policy — that letter currently has 40 sponsors; and a Senate and House bill that calls on the United States to show greater respect for Islam and to advance the rights of American Muslims. Both efforts are receiving strong Arab American grass roots support and represent positive initiatives designed to involve the community in lobbying campaigns.

Community leaders will also assess their efforts to address a number of important civil rights issues. Some progress appears to have been made on the problem of airport profiling. In the aftermath of the bombings of the U.S. embassies in Africa, the U.S. Department of Justice directed the Federal Aviation Administration to issue a strongly worded directive to U.S. airlines and airports insisting that heightened security precautions not violate the civil rights of individuals because of their ethnicity or religion. This appears to have had at least some positive impact.

When Deputy Attorney General Eric Holder, the second in command at the Department of Justice, appeared last week on my live call-in television programme on ANA-TV, he informed viewers of efforts being made at the department to address Arab American civil rights concerns. Specifically he noted that next month he will be convening the heads of FBI offices from cities where Arab Americans have complained of harassment to meet with community leaders in order to directly hear their concerns. He hopes, he said, to develop a mechanism to address and resolve these problems.

Arab Americans are currently engaged in a national mobilising effort called the "Campaign for Fairness and Inclusion" designed to protest tactics used by some candidates who Arab-bait candidates or contributors of Arab descent. The campaign has organised a national petition drive that has received the endorsement of more than 25 Arab American and American Muslim organisations and over 15 national organisations representing other ethnic communities. The leadership summit will discuss ways of expanding this campaign so as to build the broadest possible national support to end this un-American practice of discriminating against Arab Americans in politics.

Finally, Arab American community leaders will take a close look at the 1998 elections and discuss ways to increase Arab American participation.

Significant progress is being made. The national Arab American Leadership PAC is well on the way to exceeding its goal of raising more than \$100,000 (a record for any Arab American PAC) to support Arab American candidates and candidates who support Arab American concerns.

There are, in addition, a number of Arab American local PACs that have now been formed making 1998 the first year where organised Arab American PACs will join individual Arab American fund-raising efforts in support of candidates for federal office. Clearly more must be done in this area — but the community is making a serious start at campaign fund-raising.

This year 40 Arab Americans are running for federal, state and local offices. In addition to the six Arab American members of Congress who are running for reelection, two Arab Americans have won their parties' primaries and will be competing in the November elections. 18 other Arab Americans are running for state senate and representative positions, while 16 others are running for judgeships and other local positions.

In a number of states, especially where there are strong concentrations of Arab Americans, the community is heavily involved in voter registration, campaign support, fund-raising and community mobilisation for the November elections. These efforts will continue to be strengthened.

The agenda is a full one, but a necessary one. Arab Americans realise that the struggles for justice, for civil rights and for recognition are all, at their core, political struggles. The reason that there is a double standard in U.S. foreign policy is because Arab Americans have not yet achieved the political power to balance the power of those who support Israel. The reasons that negative stereotypes exist against Arabs and Muslims and the reasons that Arab American civil rights are violated are because the community has not yet achieved the political power to defend itself and to define itself.

The lesson Arab Americans are learning is a simple one: in a democracy political power is an essential prerequisite to success, not only for the community, but for the nation as a whole.

For America to correct its course in the Middle East, Arab Americans need to grow in influence as a political constituency and have their voices heard in the policy debate in the administration and in Congress.

This is a huge responsibility for a small community, but it is one that the community has assumed out of necessity. And given its continuing record of growth, it is clear that despite all the obstacles and challenges, Arab Americans are taking this responsibility seriously.

Hard target to hit

The United States cannot defeat terrorism with bombs and bombast, argues ex-CIA man Raymond Close

MY FIRST job for the CIA's clandestine services 46 years ago was to organise a network of informants in the squalid Palestinian refugee camps of southern Lebanon — some, ironically, barely a stone's throw from where my grandfather and great-grandfather established American mission schools more than a hundred years ago. The camps and the squalor are still there, no longer breeding grounds of communism as they were in the 1950s, but of the threat called terrorism.

Most of us accept the premise that terrorism is a phenomenon that can be defeated only by better ideas, by persuasion and most importantly, by amelioration of the conditions that inspire it. Terrorism's best asset, in the final analysis, is the fire in the bellies of its young men, and that fire cannot be extinguished by Tomahawk missiles. If intelligent Americans can accept that premise as a reasonable basis for dealing with this nemesis, why is it so difficult for our leaders to speak and act accordingly?

After the military strikes in Sudan and Afghanistan, U.S. officials justified their action by citing Osama Ben Laden's "declaration of war" on everything American. But to launch missiles into countries with which we are technically at peace — and to kill their citizens — is to declare that the United States is free to make its own rules for dealing with this international problem. What standing will we have in the future to complain about any other country that attacks the territory of its neighbour, citing as justification the need to protect itself from terrorism? Did those who authorised these attacks think through the long-term implications of this short-sighted and dangerous precedent?

Let's get down to practical realities. The new threat we face is often stateless, without sovereign territory or official sponsorship. Friendly governments around the world — especially those with large Muslim popula-

tions such as India, Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Gulf states and the new republics of Central Asia — share a common need for internal and regional stability. Terrorism is a weapon that threatens all civil authority. This set of circumstances provides an unprecedented incentive for intergovernmental co-operation, even among states that may differ on other basic issues. But the fight against a silent and hidden common enemy requires infinite patience and tact on the part of law enforcement agencies and intelligence services. It demands absolute secrecy, mutual trust and professional respect. If the United States loses its cool without warning, if it is seen by others as a loose cannon that resorts to sudden violent action on a massive scale, the critically needed co-operation will not be there.

My hunch is that the next time we call for help (from Pakistan, for instance, whose very competent police work was evidently vital to the investigation of the Nairobi and Dar Al Salaam bombings), the officials of that country's intelligence service who are responsible for discreet liaison with the CIA or the FBI will be conveniently "out to lunch." My ex-colleagues at the agency, and the experienced professionals at the bureau know how hard it is to develop trust, and how quickly it can evaporate.

In declaring a full-scale war on terrorism, the Clinton administration seems tempted to emulate Israel's failed example. Israel's situation is totally different from ours in every imaginable way. The state of Israel has been committed for 50 years to a policy of massive and ruthless retaliation — deliberately disproportionate. "Ten eyes for an eye," the Israelis like to say. And still their policy fails, because they have not recognised that terrorism will thrive as long as the Palestinian population is obsessed with the injustice of their lot and consumed with despair.

Even those who approve in theory of using military retaliation as a weapon against ter-

rorism would agree, I think, that launching unmanned missiles at distant targets as ill-defined as "the infrastructure of terrorism" is neither an effective military strategy nor a credible deterrent against future criminal acts. This will be even more true when the adversary is armed some day with cheap, do-it-yourself weapons of mass destruction. In our understandable frustration, are we resorting to a modern form of the same "gunboat diplomacy" that proved so counterproductive for the dying European empires at the end of the 19th century?

Over several years, the United States has tried vainly to control Iraq's behaviour by launching similar kinds of stand-off strikes against Saddam Hussein. Very recently, our policy makers concluded that this wasn't working. So when Saddam Hussein again defied the U.N. inspection regime a few weeks ago, we mumbled some weak excuses and pretended we hadn't noticed. Now, by launching attacks against suspected terrorist targets in Afghanistan and Sudan and threatening more violent retaliation in the event of further incidents, we have started down that same dead-end road. This move, seemingly inspired more by exasperation than cool reason, violates basic rules of both diplomacy and warfare.

President Clinton and others have labelled all Islamic terrorists as members or "affiliates" of the "Osama Ben Laden Network of Terrorism." This is, of course, the common mistake of demonising one individual as the root of all evil. In fact, elevating Ben Laden to that status only gives him a mantle of heroism now and, more ominously, will guarantee him martyrdom if he should die.

Informed students of the subject have known for years that although the various militant Islamist movements around the world share a common ideology and many of the same grievances, they are not a monolithic international organisation. Our recent attacks, unfortunately, may have inflamed their common zeal and hastened their unifi-

cation and centralisation — while probably adding hosts of new volunteers to their ranks. We are rolling up a big snowball.

The worst nightmare of our strategic military and security planners is that a small and weak enemy could hold us hostage by possessing a weapon of monstrous power, yet so insignificant in size and appearance that we cannot see it, cannot locate it, and therefore cannot attack and destroy it. The recent military strikes sent the message again, loudly and clearly, to all who would count themselves as our enemies: Accelerate your efforts to acquire new and deadly high-technology weapons — and manufacture and store those weapons in hard shelters in the midst of your civilian population. American policy makers and military planners have an obligation to evaluate every proposed action by the standard of whether it will help postpone the day when this nightmare may come true. I believe our leadership failed to do so before last month's operations.

Meanwhile, the bombing, portrayed as necessary to forestall additional terrorist acts, has produced a level of public alarm in Washington that is precisely what the terrorists hoped to inspire. What have we done to ourselves?

What worries me most, in the final analysis, is that our attacks on the targets in Afghanistan and Sudan were reminiscent of what we call "vigilante justice" in American folklore. This kind of policy weakens our leadership position in the world and undermines the most effective defences we will have against the terrorist threat: a commitment to the rule of law, dedication to fairness and even-handedness in settling international disputes and a reputation as the most humanitarian nation in the world.

The writer, who served in the CIA from 1951 to 1977, is an international business consultant who travels frequently to the Middle East.

— The Guardian

The low-down impeachment blues

By Gwynne Dyer

"IF THE deponent is the person who has oral sex performed on him, then the contact is not with anything on that list [of naughty bits which it would constitute 'sexual relations' to touch], but with the lips of another person. Let me remind you, sir, I read this carefully." — Bill Clinton, explaining to the grand jury last month that Monica Lewinsky had "sexual relations" with him, but he didn't have sexual relations with her.

"I hope that millions of families all over America are, in a way, growing stronger because of this." — Clinton, two days before the publication of the Starr Report.

I know it's supposed to be serious, but somewhere between the hair-splitting lawyer bit and the sanctimonious patriarch act I just broke up. I'm sorry, but I think it's funny. I mean, if he had stuck to sheep he wouldn't be in all this trouble. It goes to show what you miss when you lose out on a classical education. The ancient Greeks may have been kinky, but they knew how to combine priapism and public life. As Aristotle (I think it was) put it: "a woman for duty, a boy for pleasure, a sheep for discretion."

But the Arkansas public schools no longer teach the classics, so now the papers, which at this time of year would normally contain mind-bogglingly boring analyses of the congressional mid-term elections, are filled instead with exciting top-shelf reading material. "The boy just doesn't learn, does he?" Jennifer Flowers put it when the Paula Jones story hit the news — but he does keep us entertained. He is also contributing, albeit inadvertently, to the embellishment of the language, which is daily being enriched by delightful new phrases like "contrition offensive." However, like Hitler's invasion of Russia, Clinton's contrition offensive got started too late in the season, with potentially fatal results.

There was a famous (but never publicised) catch-phrase in the World War II. Some say it was the British who originated it, others the Australians, but it was what you said when your platoon had spent the whole afternoon working its way closer to a German pillbox, and you had already lost half a dozen killed and wounded, and just as you got close enough to chuck a grenade in through the machine-gun slit — out came the crew with their hands up.

What you said was "Too late, chum," and shot them down anyway. That is approximately what is going to happen to Clinton, who has been fatally behind the music at every step of the dance. To get a free pardon in the court of public opinion, you have to get your apology in before they convict you.

Stumbling reluctantly from full-throated denial ("That woman!", February '98) to mumbled evasions ("not appropriate," mid-August), then to long-range apologies ("Sorry," Ireland, late August), and finally to abject self-condemnation only as the impeachment machinery lurches into motion ("I have sinned," White House, September 11), makes it look as if the boy is insincere.

America is a deeply religious country with maudlin and easily distracted media, so getting all sanctimonious and penitential usually works well for a politician. It is probably not going to work for Clinton, because his contrition has been too slow and too sly. Some time in the next few months, he will probably be forced to resign. But so what? American pundits burble on about the "sanctity" of the presidential office — which is imbued with a quasi-religious quality in the eyes

of many Americans — and fret about how Clinton's impeachment and/or resignation will undermine it. But the truth is that the U.S. presidency is one of the weakest seats of executive power in the world (the "separation of powers," remember?), and that it makes little difference to the real world whether Clinton stays or goes.

Clinton's high approval rating with voters is mostly due to the long boom in the U.S. economy — which, as any economist will tell you, he can take no credit whatever for. His major initiatives in domestic policy, in six years in office, could be counted on the fingers of one badly mutilated hand. And as for foreign policy — well, he does bomb places occasionally, but the Pentagon won't let him bomb anywhere more dangerous than Sudan and Afghanistan.

In fact, if a lengthy impeachment crisis completely paralyses U.S. foreign policy, you won't even notice the difference. Nothing will be done to bring the Middle Eastern peace process back from the grave, nobody will stop the Serbs from doing to Kosovo what they did to Bosnia, nothing will be done on a dozen other issues — but nothing decisive was being done before,

either. So just lie back and enjoy the spectacle. Clinton doesn't exactly deserve what's going to happen to him, in the sense that every body lies about their sex lives (except eunuchs, perhaps, and even they...). But he's such a cowardly, manipulative hypocrite that you can't really object to the workings of fate on this occasion.

There's also much entertainment to be had from watching the Republicans squirm as they try to avoid the increasingly likely denouement: a Clinton resignation just after the halfway point of his term in January, and the elevation of Al Gore to the presidency in ample time to bury the scandal, boost his own profile, and dash their hopes of capturing the office in 2000.

And the lasting relevance of this affair (if there is any)? Only a greater reluctance among over-sexed male politicians to believe that 21-year-old women do not discuss their sex lives with their girlfriends, and perhaps a rise in the popularity of sheep.

The writer is a London-based journalist and historian whose articles are published in 45 countries.

running for federal
to the six Arab
ho are running for
e won their parties
the November elec-
nning for state sen-
le 16 others are run-
positions.
here there are strong
the community is
a campaign support
obilisation for the
will continue to be

necessary one. Arab
for justice, for civil
their core political
double standard in
Americans have not
balance the power of
asons that negative
Muslims and the re-
ghts are violated are
achieved the political
itself.
ining is a simple one
essential prerequisite
ity, but for the nation

e in the Middle East
fluence as a political
s heard in the policy
Congress.
small community, but
summed out of neces-
l of growth, it is clear
and challenges. Arab
ility seriously.

Kabila reaches out to powerful allies to turn back a rebellion. Is this the start of regional war that could tear apart central Africa?

By Marcus Mabry
and Alan Zarembo

from using Kivu
in eastern Congo
as a base to attack
across the border.
"We thought if he
was given some
support and time
that he could turn
things around,"
says a top Rwan-
dan military offi-
cer, "only to
realise that he is
not different from
Mobutu." Once
that reality settled
in, Congolese
began to see
another problem:
Too many Tutsis
— both Congolese
and Rwandan —
in senior govern-
ment jobs. In late
July, Kabila
bowed to popular
pressure and ordered them to leave.
On Aug. 2, the 16,000-man 10th
Brigade of his army mutinied — with
a push from Rwanda's Tutsi-led mili-
tary, foreign diplomats believe. The
insurrection spread and, with foreign
help, the rebels quickly captured a
large chunk of the east and several key
points west of Kinshasa.
The turnaround began with the
arrival of Kabila's allies, Angola
quickly took back the military base in
the town of Kitona, which the rebels
had been using as a staging ground.
Zimbabwean and Congolese soldiers
defended the airport outside Kinshasa.
The capital itself erupted in fierce
fighting that spread through the neigh-
bourhoods, but by Saturday it looked
like Kabila and his allies had crushed
the rebel assault. The government
claimed it had killed or imprisoned
thousands of rebels, including Rwan-
dan soldiers. Suddenly Kabila seemed

not doomed but invigorated. When the
rebels announced support for a cease-
fire, Kabila said: Not until the "for-
eign invaders" — Rwandans, Ugan-
dians and, by implication, Congolese
Tutsis — leave the country.
That rhetoric has struck a deadly
chord of nationalism in Congo. Gov-
ernment radio broadcast such mes-
sages as "be extra vigilant and track
down the enemy wherever he hides."
When the rebellion began, Congolese
Tutsis in Kinshasa were beaten and
killed by mobs. Hundreds have disap-
peared, and thousands more are in hid-
ing. But last week, as the rebels
attacked Kinshasa, it was the non-
Tutsi Congolese soldiers allied with
the Tutsi-led rebellion who were tar-
gets of civilians. Said one local news
cameraman: "I saw about 40 rebels,
all burned by civilians." While the
government fought rebels for control
of Kinshasa, Rwanda called the clash

es the beginning of a genocide. Kabila
does appear to have made some nasty
friends. An internal United Nations
report provided to Newsweek says the
Rwandan Hutu militiamen and former
government troops — the perpetrators
of the 1994 genocide of Tutsis in
Rwanda — have recently crossed into
Congo from refugee camps in the
Republic of Congo, a separate country
to the north-west. For their part, the
Rwandans have teamed up with el-
ements of Mobutu's former army.
Kabila's most important allies are
Angola and Zimbabwe, which have
two of the continent's best-equipped
armies. They want to keep Congo
whole for economic reasons: Angola
wants to build an oil pipeline through
part of Congo, and over the last year
Zimbabwe has made several invest-
ments there. But more important,
Angolan authorities believe that a
balkanised Congo would provide

sanctuary for UNITA, the rebels
who've fought Angola for two
decades.
The main voice for peace has come
from South African President Nelson
Mandela. But even with the moral
authority he commands, a peace deal
seems unlikely. The most important
question is whether Kabila's allies
will fight to help him regain eastern
Congo. Airstrikes are possible;
already there are reports of bombings
outside the rebel-held city of Kisan-
gani. But it's doubtful Kabila's sup-
porters will commit the thousands of
ground troops required to drive the
rebels out. If Kabila plans to make
good on his threat to take the war back
to Kigali, he'll probably have to do it
alone. That would mean fighting —
and losing — a war with Rwanda,
a country that in many ways views itself
as the Israel of Africa. Both are small
nations with strong militaries and

leaders who believe buffer zones offer
the best protection from hostile neigh-
bours. Kivu could become Rwanda's
West Bank.
It would not be a peaceful place. The
rebels have not been received with
enthusiasm. Their main allies, the
Congolese Tutsis, are a minority that
has never been fully accepted by the
population. There are reports of clash-
es between the rebels and local mili-
tias. Last week more than 200 people
were massacred at a Catholic mission
and village churches near the city of
Uvira. The Vatican blamed the killings
on rebels trying to wipe out local sup-
port for the government. A senior
humanitarian official with long expe-
rience in the region says: "The long-
term confrontation will be in the east-
ern half of Congo." Then there's the
rest of central and southern Africa.

— Time



Bloodlust
in
Kinshasa
as soldiers
throw a
suspect
over a
bridge and
then shoot
at him
(Time photo)

ation — while probab-
new volunteers in the
g up a big snowball.
are of out-strategis-
matters is that a small
bold us hostage by po-
f monstrous power, yet
and appreciate the
of locate it, and there-
destroy it. The recent
re message again, both
who would count their
emies. Accelerate the
ew and deadly high-
— and manufacturing
ns in hard shelters in
ian population. America
military planners have
ate every proposed
whether it will help po-
this nightmare may
leadership failed to do
s operations.
bombing, portrayed a
small additional term-
a level of public alarm
precisely what the
re. What then we do

e most, in the final
attacks on the target-
udan were commensu-
lante justice." In America
of policy, we have
a in the world and we
effective defence, we
terrorist threat, a com-
law, dedication to the
ness in setting inter-
a reputation as the
on in the world

erved in the CIA and
international relations
frequently in the
the Middle

The Cause

Science and technology

Asian institutions
gear up for 2000
bug as panic looms

By Lara Parpan
Agence France Presse

PANIC OVER millennium bug doomsday scenarios may do just as much harm as the computer glitch itself, even as Asian governments and financial institutions race against time to set in place solutions by 2000, experts warn.

The consequences of failing to have computer systems corrected for the computer bug known world-wide as Y2K have ranged from bawc on electronic transactions to loss of life.

Millions of computers can only read the last two digits of the year. With the dawn of 2000, they are predicted to crash or produce erroneous data as they rewind to 1900 instead.

"I think a more important question to ask is how does it affect the average person... The fear factor will probably be more of a problem than the Y2K bug itself," said Joe Sweeney, research director for the Gartner Group in Hong Kong.

Asia, in the throes of a deepening financial crisis, has been touted as the region least prepared for the Y2K bug, although banks and financial institutions are highly aware of the problem and have embarked on programmes to become Y2K compliant.

"The bug may not affect the bank, but the fear that the bug may affect the bank could lead to bank runs," Sweeney told AFP.

"Banks then need to make clear their policies on the Y2K problem. They should make public statements as to their readiness to help dispel concerns," he said.

Industrialised territories in the region such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia, are spearheading such moves.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS) has set a deadline of December 31, 1998 for companies to implement measures, and said last week that at least 90 per cent of Singapore's financial organisations were "fully on track" to meet the deadline.

Singapore's stock exchange a week ago conducted a successful test run to prepare the trading system for 2000. In Hong

The central People's Bank of China (PBOC), which relies on electronic fund transfers with its overseas branches, is upgrading its software and thorough testing will conclude by 1999, a report from the U.S. embassy in Beijing posted on the Internet said.

India has pooled \$375 million for its Y2K efforts, with nearly half the amount coming from government. Private companies have also employed more than 10,000 software professionals to solve the glitches. A survey of 500 companies in India by International Data Corp. shows that only two per cent of firms have yet to address the problem, and the government is confident that Y2K problems will be solved by mid-1999. However, some other countries are less well advanced in ensuring their computer systems do not suffer a grisly fate come the new millennium.

In the Philippines, "no central facility has been established to conduct a thorough inventory of the situation, or make recommendations to guide the government," the South East Asia Regional Computer Confederation said in a report.

New dawn for the media as
Starr report appears on Internet

By Michaela Cancell-Kieffer
Agence France Presse

THE PUBLICATION on the Internet of the Starr report on President Bill Clinton's sexual escapades with a White House intern marked a historic moment — not only for the U.S. political system, but also for traditional media.

With the report of independent counsel Kenneth Starr available Friday to the general public at the same time it reached the desks of congressmen and the president, Americans were able to get the news directly, without passing through the usual filter of journalists or politicians.

"It does show off the new democracy. Everything is public and accessible," said Lee Clontz of the Center for New Media at Columbia University in New York.

In the United States, where the Web was born, specialists have for years been forecasting the death of journalism, as sources become able to communicate directly with the public through their own Internet sites.

In 1997, more than 350 U.S. newspapers had their own on-line editions, seeing it as the only way to ensure their continued existence.

Dailies and television news programmes have made "Net coverage a regular beat, with reporters writing regularly on the new Web sites.

The Internet has been growing in popularity for years, with an estimated 80 million users world-wide. And on Friday it seemed as if all of them tried to see the report.

In the first hour after the Starr report was posted on several sites, more than 62,000 copies were downloaded before journalists and lawmakers had a real chance to read through the 445-page document.

The Starr report's simultaneous release to the public and press, and its electronic publication, "proves the press is no longer necessary," said Stanford Hunger, head of the Communications School at American University in Washington.

The biggest proof of that, said Hunger, a former Washington Post reporter, is the fact that traditional news outlets felt forced to put the entire report on their own Web sites.

"If the Washington Post didn't put the report on line, (the paper) couldn't exist," he said.

Frank Conolly, a professor at American University and the author of several reports on the Internet for Congress, sees that as a positive development.

"It's wonderful that people can look at it and draw their own conclusions," Conolly said.

"Citizens will be more informed and that is good," said John Pavlick of Columbia University's journalism school. "But journalists must evolve — they are no longer the primary providers of news. Their role is to make sense."

But Clontz and others point out that children were able to access Starr's report, with its often sexually explicit descriptions of Clinton's encounters with Monica Lewinsky. Newspapers, radio and television were unable to filter the more salacious details.

"There has been a lot of debate over whether explicit material should be distributed," Clontz said. "This is being distributed from the Library of Congress Web site."

That happened despite the congressional majority of Republicans, the self-described defenders of morality, he said.

Hunger agrees with some of the president's defenders, who saw political motives in the decision to release the report before Clinton's lawyers had a chance to see it.

"The Republicans profited by releasing the report without interpretation by journalists," Hunger says.

Starr's report, he points out, contains only the prosecutor's side of the case and his own allegations, which Clinton's legal team was not able to review.

But Clontz remains optimistic.

"It is good," he said, because journalists "are going to be challenged" and will have to show they can produce a product that can compete with the Web.

Online librarians take bite out of info quest

By Michelle Rafter
Reuters

IN THE days before the Internet, if you wanted to learn more about a subject a good place to start was the reference section of your school library or local public library. If the librarians at the desk did not know the answer, they always knew where to look.

Now, with the Web evolving into the world's largest repository of information, companies such as Ask Jeeves (<http://www.askjeeves.com>), InfoPlease (<http://www.infoplease.com>), Answers.com (<http://www.answers.com>) and Electric Library (<http://elibrary.com>) are attempting to duplicate online the services of flesh-and-blood reference librarians.

Expect to see more of these reference services soon.

Officials at Ask Jeeves and InfoPlease are negotiating partnerships that will pair them up with major portal sites — sites such as Yahoo! (<http://www.yahoo.com>) that are popular gateways for users seeking information on the Web.

"The problem is there's so much out there. (Portal sites) are interested in delivering their clients higher calibre information and that's where we come in," InfoPlease marketing manager Sasha Norkin said.

Like their human counterparts, electronic reference services tap into encyclopaedias, almanacs and other large databases of information on subjects as diverse as world geography and popular culture. Some also incorporate online resources or, as is the case with Ask Jeeves, point to other Web sites if they get stuck on a question.

Most Internet reference robots offer real-time assistance: type in a query and answers pop up in about the same time it takes a Web directory to do a search. On Answers.com, if an answer is not available instantly

you can ask to have it e-mailed to you once the information has been found. Response times vary between a few minutes and a couple of hours.

Possibly the best feature of these new reference services is their ability to "understand" queries written in plain English.

That means searchers can ask simple questions rather than using arcane Boolean search terms that are standard operating procedure in Web directories such as Yahoo and Excite.

Most Net-based reference services are free. Companies support their operations through advertising and partnerships.

A notable exception is Electric Library, an early adopter of natural-language searching owned by Info-nautics in Wayne, Pennsylvania. It charges \$9.95 a month for access to a database of books, photos, maps, TV and radio transcripts and articles from hundreds of newspapers, magazines and trade publications.

But performance remains spotty. To test it, three questions were posed to all four services: (1) Who was the 16th president of the United States? (2) What is the major export of Brazil? (3) What was the most-watched TV show of all time? None came up with all the answers. The best was Ask Jeeves, which returned detailed answers for two of the three. Named after British novelist P.D. Wodehouse's all-knowing butler, Ask Jeeves was created 15 months ago by a private Berkeley, California, company of the same name and recently spun off a separate children's service called Ask Jeeves for Kids (<http://www.ajkids.com>).

On the first question, Ask Jeeves offered an almanac entry on Abraham Lincoln that included a short biography, familiar quotations, inaugural addresses, a photo and links to famous speeches and Mary Todd Lincoln. It also delivered pointers to relat-

ed information such as U.S. presidents and history. In Ask Jeeves for Kids some content is created by children.

InfoPlease, which launched unofficially in mid-August and has its grand opening this week, is the Internet arm of Information Please LLC, a 50-year-old publisher of print almanacs. The reference service uses as its databases Information Please almanacs on world geography, sports and entertainment, plus the Columbia Encyclopedia and Random House Webster's College Dictionary and news stories written by the company's editorial staff.

Answers.com began in late 1996 as a fee-based service that hooked people up with professional researchers, but the idea did not fly. So this summer the company, part of a stable of Internet start-ups created through the Idealabs Internet incubator, was relaunched as an automated natural-language reference service.

Although Answers.com did not return answers to any of the three questions in real time, the service was the only one to come up with the most-watched TV show ever: Super Bowl XXX on Jan. 28, 1996, viewed by 138.5 million.

If you still prefer the human touch, consider the reference desk at the University of Michigan's Internet Public Library (<http://www.ipl.org>) project. One of the first online reference desks, IPL has grown to a staff of 140 university librarians from around the country.

The service is run on a volunteer basis so getting an answer can take up to a week and librarians do not tackle every question they receive. To make up for it, the IPL reference desk maintains a comprehensive FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) file and a compilation of study guides pointing to reference books, magazines and Web sites on a variety of subjects.

Musa: Egypt is moving from the defensive to the offensive

CAIRO (R) — Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Tuesday Egypt was seeking to expand its place in the global economy by securing more investments and bigger export markets.

"Egypt is moving from the defensive to the offensive," the minister told a regional economic conference in Cairo.

"Egypt is undertaking all efforts to integrate fully in the world economy with a view to realizing the benefits of globalization," he added. "A lot still has to be done. The road ahead is still long but we are on track."

Egypt is embarking on an economic reform programme and aims to increase exports and attract more foreign private capital.

Prime Minister Kamel Ganzouri told the conference foreign investment was needed to boost the economic growth rate to seven or eight per cent by 2000 from 5.7 per cent in fiscal 1997/8.

Musa said he hoped strong political and economic ties with Arab, African, Asian, European and north and southern American countries would translate into more investment.

"Egypt has embarked on an ambitious and worldwide public relations campaign to achieve expansion of investments and export-led growth... Our policy to introduce investment in Egypt is transparent and credible," he added.

The minister said Egypt had signed free trade deals with Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco. This year, it also became a member of the Common Market of East and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The minister said the bloc's trade was expected to reach \$4 billion in 2000 up from \$2.5 billion in 1996. "Egypt's strategy is towards increasing trade with COMESA to reach around \$1 billion by the

time the barriers are removed (by 2000)."

Musa said Egypt was also pursuing a partnership agreement with the European Union (EU) but was irked by the 15-nation bloc's anti-dumping measures against Egyptian unleached cotton.

The EU is Egypt's main trading partner and accounts, along with the United States, for about 60 per cent of exports.

"We are perplexed rather than dismayed at the behaviour of the European Union regarding the anti-dumping measures... (this) conflicts blatantly with the strongly advocated policy of openness and free-trade the world is advocating," he said.

Egypt was also expanding economic ties with other emerging markets in Asia and the former Soviet republics. Trade with Asian states was \$3 billion in 1997, Musa said.

The minister said he would head a business delegation to Latin America in early 1999.

These efforts were aimed at telling investors about Egypt's growing economy, favourable investment ratings and stability vis-a-vis the turmoil in other emerging markets, Musa said.

"Major investors are likely to diversify their investment portfolios in the aftermath of the recent crises, and Egypt, with its competitive incentive package, stands a good chance of receiving a reasonable portion from the resulting investment outflows," the minister said.

Meanwhile, Economy Minister Youssef Boutros-Ghali said Tuesday Egypt was achieving good economic indicators and was unlikely to see its credit rating erode.

"Egypt's fundamentals are fine," Boutros-Ghali told Reuters on the sidelines of a EuroMoney conference in Cairo. "We are doing well."

He was responding to a report on Tuesday by the rating agency Standard & Poor's (S&P), which said

that signs of deteriorating credit quality were evident in 16 countries' financial systems.

Visible signs of weakness were evident in seven, while Egypt was listed among nine countries, including the United States, whose "apparently robust" financial systems were vulnerable.

"Some of these systems' fundamentals are so poor that half of their assets may become problematic; for others the decline will be relatively mild," the report in the S&P publication CreditWeek said.

"We will be in the relatively mild category... They are putting me in the same category as the United States. Is that supposed to make me upset?" Boutros-Ghali said.

He said on Monday that he expected gross domestic product (GDP) to grow about six per cent in fiscal 1998/9 (July-June), up from five per cent in 1997/8.

The balance of payments would remain in surplus to

the tune of \$500 million in \$700 million in 1998/9 and the current account was likely to stay the same in absolute terms and therefore decline as a proportion of GDP.

The budget deficit would remain less than one per cent of GDP, he

said. The S&P report said Egypt had experienced both high credit growth and a weakening external funding profile.

"The twin, in fact, are related," it said. "The credit growth has been financed in part by rede-

playing external assets. "The credit growth derived from a more benign economic environment, engendered by steady economic growth, market liberalisation and privatisations," the report added.

REUTERS • REUTERS • The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.8048	0.6912	1.5022	131.60	1.4338	1783.90	2.0310	6.6060
DE Mark	0.5541	-	0.3273	0.6324	72.91	0.7941	988.03	1.1280	3.3827
GB Sterling	1.6915	0.3068	-	2.5414	222.69	2.4254	3017.33	3.4374	10.2364
CH Franc	0.6687	120.06	0.3930	-	87.57	0.9538	1186.47	135.16	4.0247
JP Yen	0.0078	1.3703	0.4488	1.1411	-	1.0889	13.55	154.35	4.8955
CA Dollar	0.6974	1.2916	0.4225	1.0668	1.09	-	1270.80	1.4551	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0112	0.3312	0.0842	1367.22	0.8034	-	11.39	3.3913
NL Guilder	0.4922	88.77	0.2907	73.93	64.71	0.7052	877.49	-	2.9768
FR Franc	0.1653	0.2280	0.0976	24.8174	21.72	0.2368	33.57	33.5700	-

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7090	3.7506	0.3770	3.6408	0.3062	3.6728	1527.00	3.4160
Jordan Dinar	1.4104	-	5.2800	0.6337	5.1351	0.4304	5.1804	2153.74	4.8181
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1890	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0814	0.98	407.13	0.9108
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8806	9.3485	-	9.66	0.8095	9.74	4050.40	9.0610
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1947	1.0302	1.0302	-	0.0838	1.01	419.41	0.9383
Kuwait Dinar	3.2769	2.3233	12.2902	1.2364	11.93	-	12.04	5003.77	0.9383
Emirate Dinar	0.2723	0.1912	1.0212	1.0212	0.9813	0.0831	-	415.75	0.9108
Lebanese/1000	0.65	0.4643	2.4582	0.2489	2.3843	0.1998	2.4053	-	2.2371
Egyptian	0.2927	0.2076	1.0950	0.1104	1.0658	0.0893	1.0752	447.01	-

Energy		
Oils	Last	Previous
Brent	13.81	13.38
WTI	15.97	15.60
Bonny	13.81	13.38
Dubai	12.47	11.41
UL Gas	167.00	154.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4813	0.15753	0.40079	35.1012
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.49145	0.16096	0.40927	35.8436
KW Dinar	3.2769	5.91366	1.93723	4.92611	431.406
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.78698	1.58814	3.98724	349.162
CY Pound	1.8910	3.4128	1.1178	2.8419	248.808

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	307.6	308.1
Silver (oz's)	6.27	6.3
Platinum (oz's)	412.5	414.5
AL (3 Months)	1458	1461
CU (3 Months)	1845	1848
Zinc (3 Months)	1117	1119
Lead (3 Months)	676	679
Ni (3 Months)	5445	5465

Libor Fixing					
Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-12-	Year
Ctry	Month	Months	Months	Months	
USD	5.6719	5.7422	5.7813	5.9063	
GBP	7.4427	7.5104	7.5104	7.4948	
JPY	0.6687	0.7500	0.7604	0.7813	
DEM	3.5935	3.6562	3.7500	3.9581	
FRF	3.5771	1.5625	1.6979	1.8958	
CHF	1.4063	3.5663	3.7658	3.9688	
ITL	5.8110	6.2390	4.9460	-	

Main Equity Indices							
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	P/Cls
New York	DOW JONES	9079.06	-83.21	-0.91	9164.78	9072.34	9162.27
New York	S&P 500	1108.71	-10.61	-0.96	1119.32	1107.84	1115.32
London	FT-SE 100	6002	-72.1	-1.19	6074.1	5964.4	6074.1
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	15883.77	-416.53	-2.56	16416.7	15875.1	16299.3
Paris	CAC 40	3845.94	-38.67	-1	3895.44	3821.92	3884.81
Frankfurt	DAX	5324.14	-64.33	-1.19	5382.26	5313.77	5388.47

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	0	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1745	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	253.5	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	86	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	27.91	Spot
Tea (std/kg)	148	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	400	Spot

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.19	1.196	
DE Mark	0.3923	0.3943	
CH Franc	0.4723	0.4747	
FR Franc	0.117	0.1176	
JP Yen	0.5396	0.5423	
NL Guilder	0.3485	0.3502	
IT Lira	0.3367	0.3387	

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

International credit rating agency sees signs of strain in 16 financial systems

HONG KONG (AFP) — Global credit rating agency Standard and Poor's (S&P) warned Tuesday of weaknesses in the financial systems of 16 economies, with up to 70 per cent of China's assets at risk.

The New York-based credit assessor included seven Asian economies — China, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan — among the 16 which revealed signs of deteriorating credit quality.

The others were Chile, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Israel, Lebanon, Panama, the Slovak Republic and the United States.

In a report received here, Standard and Poor's said excessive credit growth, weakening external funding profiles and deflating, or soon to be deflating, asset prices were a concern in all 16 economies.

"Some of these systems' fundamentals are so poor that half of their assets may become problematic; for others

the decline will be relatively mild," it said in a special report.

Standard and Poor's said China's gross problematic assets (GPA) could potentially range between 35 to 70 per cent of its total assets.

It defined the potential level of GPA as a percentage of domestic credit to the private sector and non-financial enterprises.

The agency cited a slowdown in economic growth, falling property prices and declining corporate health, as factors which could lead to an explosion of problem loans in China.

It also said Chinese banks lacked the credit skills to deal with the problem and warned that the cost to the government was likely to be high.

In Japan, Standard and Poor's estimated problem assets could amount to about 20 per cent of the total, higher than its previous estimate of 15 per cent.

The upward revision reflects the depth of the

country's recession, the report said, adding the costs of recapitalising the teetering financial system could amount to 10 to 15 per cent of gross domestic product.

The agency said increased competition in Japan's financial sector as a result of its "Big Bang" financial reforms will put further pressure on the Japanese banking system.

"The banks' ability to resolve credit quality problems is made more difficult by sagging collateral values and stock market volatility," it said.

Japan's parliament is currently debating a set of key bills to reform the financial sector.

Hong Kong's banks are well-managed and the territory has a "solid regulatory" environment, but S&P said the system could still come under severe pressure if the local currency's link to the U.S. dollar is broken.

The report said Hong Kong's credit growth had been high and was

now faced with increasing exposure to declining property and stock markets which have slumped drastically in the past year.

Standard and Poor's last month downgraded Hong Kong's sovereign credit rating due to the deepening recession and in part to the government's decision to intervene heavily in the markets to stamp out speculation against the local dollar.

The agency also revised upwards its forecasts for gross problematic assets in South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia due to the prolonged nature of the financial crisis.

It said the Malaysian government's recent decision to impose strict capital controls on the ringgit and reluctance to open the financial sector to foreign controlling stakes would greatly delay a recovery.

Standard and Poor's predicted problem loans could hit 40 per cent as falling asset prices and

the slowing economy left the highly leveraged Malaysian corporate sector exposed.

The report also reveals vulnerable signs in countries whose financial system appeared to be robust, including Singapore and Taiwan.

Singapore banks' exposure to South East Asia and the capital controls in Malaysia could hit its position as a financial centre and push up bad loans, it said.

Taiwan's economy is slowing down, which may markedly increase non-performing loans in real estate, corporate and consumer finance, the report said.

In reaching its conclusions, Standard and Poor's studied a range of leading indicators to spot adverse trends, including credit growth, household indebtedness, asset price inflation and external funds.

Rapid increases in two or more of the indicators denote potential problems, it says.

THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

ACROSS

- Withstand
- Unwavering
- Two-player card game
- Female hormone
- Alpine peak plus cartoon voice
- Way in: abbr.
- (Obsession)
- Against prof.
- E. O'Brien film
- Ossk type
- Cave dwelling
- Islamic leader
- Basic character
- Nabokov novel
- Klein
- Nachttrank
- Head contraction
- Meager
- Carried
- Platitudes
- Church part
- Hair fashions
- O.T. prophet
- Side order, often
- Gov't trade grp.
- acid (tobacco additive)
- Haughtily aloof
- Pierce
- Instrument in an Italian orchestra
- Takes to court
- Jersey peninsula plus band leader
- Set thermostat too low
- Fly
- Roman coin
- Wrote.

DOWN

- Corrects
- Financially rewarding
- California winter wind
- Kind of ligaments
- Thaws again
- Language suffix
- Letters on Cardinals' caps
- Sphere
- Singer Falano
- Rwandan neighbor
- Covered by a structure
- Southwestern live oak
- Put off
- Charm
- Flea a storm
- Gold in Madrid
- Bombard
- Result of an action: suff.
- Millennia
- Chi-town paper
- Charm
- Flea a storm
- Writer Fleming
- Comparatively large
- New Zealand
- Polynesian
- Negative conjunction
- Land's end?
- Have a cow?
- Lahr or Lance
- High card
- Negative conjunction
- Land's end?

FATAL TIES

ALONE ATTU RULE

CANADAMSEL TRDN

TRIG RAY TEEMED

REAL BALSA

CUBALLERINA DAM

ATOMS ETAL ODE

BITS HAYES ENDS

ALS PELE ACNES

LEW IRELANDLADY

AZTEC LOVE

JUNEAU STR COMA

ANAS PANAMATRON

MINT DOR DIANA

STAY NABS EDLAT

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RUIFT

SEGIN

NAPTIC

BOLIFE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: LIBEL CURRY MINGLE ZODIAC

Answer: The crowd thought the tumbler's performance was — "INCREDI-BULL!"

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

JBA chief underlines need for upgrading level, performance of public sector institutions

JORDANIAN BUSINESSMEN Association (JBA) President Hamdi Tabbaa stressed in a lecture he delivered recently the need to upgrade the level and the performance of various public sector institutions because the state administration has been in a continuous retreat some time. He said that the investment climate we have always cherished is now being faced with moody and bureaucratic bindrances.

In his address entitled "The Jordanian economy at present and the future outlook," Tabbaa emphasized that the solution to the Kingdom's economic problems cannot be in isolation of the Arab environment as the Arab economies represent a strategic depth to the Jordanian economy. "In addition, Jordan should in the first place strengthen its trade relations with the neighbouring Arab countries," he said.

According to Tabbaa, the fast materialisation of an Arab free trade zone and the support to establish an Arab economic bloc, like other international economic blocs, would be an answer and a response to similar anticipated challenges. He saw the consolidation of ties on all levels with neighbouring Arab countries and other friendly states as a support and consolidation to efforts for bringing up the internal Jordanian economy.

Tabbaa said the focus should be on the sectors where Jordan enjoys a

relative and competitive edge such as education, tourism and the medical sectors. He added that the Kingdom's geographical position should be utilised to make Jordan a central regional commercial centre.

The JBA chief blamed the Israeli intransigence for the economic slowdown in the region and the cancellation of many joint projects which many people were counting upon although such projects would have served Israel more than any other Arab country. He mentioned the regional development bank, the free zones, transport schemes and tourism cooperation as some of the joint areas that were included in the plans. Furthermore, Tabbaa continued, the impasse in the troubled peace process has brought a state of instability to the region and pushed many investors to hold back investing in new projects.

The former minister of industry and trade referred to many obstacles placed by Israel to obstruct trade between Jordan and Israel itself as well as Palestine. "And now it is using a dumping policy in providing services from its ports for travel and shipments at very low prices which undoubtedly will harm shipping to the port of Aqaba and transporting via Royal Jordanian (AJ Dustour).

Jordanian, Pakistani economic talks start today

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian and Pakistani economists and businessmen today hold talks at the Amman Chamber of Commerce on economic relations and means of increasing commercial exchange between both countries. President of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce Haidar Murad will head the Jordanian delegation to the meetings, while the Pakistani delegation will be headed by Hassan Zahir who is currently in Jordan as the head of a Pakistani businessman delegation.

Meanwhile, Jordanian and Palestinian businessmen will hold talks Thursday on enhancing bilateral economic cooperation.

During the meeting, which will be held at the Amman Chamber of Industry, the businessmen will discuss means of increasing the volume of trade between Jordan and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA).

The balance of trade is in favour of the PNA. Jordanian imports from PNA amounted to JD23 million in 1997 while Jordanian exports to PNA amounted to JD12 million.

Dubai gold trade ponders new trading environment

DUBAI (R) — Dubai, the world's prime gold re-export centre, has taken time out to reassess its future strategy after losing ground in the key Indian bullion market.

Bullion traders in the Arab Gulf emirate have seen sales to India ebb away after New Delhi's decision to liberalise its gold market by allowing some banks and agencies to buy their yellow metal direct from source, bypassing agents in Dubai.

India — the world's single largest consumer of gold — accounted for some 80 per cent of the 660 tonnes imported last year into Dubai, one of the seven emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates.

As Indian direct imports from Switzerland, South Africa and Britain grow,

Dubai's imports have fallen to 244 tonnes in the first half of the year, down 20 per cent on the same period in 1997, figures showed. Imports hit a new low in June when they slumped to 24 tonnes, down 47 per cent on the same month last year.

At current bullion prices, the tonnage equates to nearly \$600 million in lost business during the six-month period. "Dubai's imports have gone down as a direct consequence of changes in India but the Dubai trade is not going to sit and cry," one leading industry executive said.

A seasonal lull in Indian buying and a slowdown in retail sales in the emirate because of scorching summer temperatures has allowed time to draw up

business plans to revamp sales.

"New markets have to be found. India has been the mainstay of our business for many years but it cannot be relied upon forever," the industry executive said.

Traders said that prime new markets would be nearby Iran, Pakistan, Egypt and Lebanon, backed by strong marketing of a long-awaited Dubai hall-mark and an emphasis on small gold bars incorporated into jewellery pieces.

Dubai traders were also looking at increasing the local manufacture of the benchmark ten tola (TT) bars, boosting the local gold recycling sector and increasing the size of import consignments to cut import costs and stay competitive. Even with these changes,

traders said it would be unlikely that the emirate's imports would recover this year to reach the record level of 660 tonnes imported into Dubai last year.

Indian import demand is expected to stay subdued until the end of August or early September when gold demand traditionally picks up because of the local wedding and festival season.

Sellers were also putting faith in continuing economic uncertainty in India after the United States imposed sanctions against the New Delhi government for conducting nuclear tests in May.

"Whenever there is uncertainty the need for gold is more," said one observer of the Dubai gold scene.

nsive

ing external assets, he credit growth ved from a more ign economic environ- it, engendered by dy economic growth, ket liberalisation and atisations," the topn ed.

ERS

ation

st	15/09/98 17:35
ITL	2.0318
NGC	6.0906
88.03	1.1280
3.3527	
0.1733	3.4374
10.3264	
186.47	135.16
4.0247	
13.55	154.35
4.9595	
270.80	1.4551
4.3265	
11.39	3.2613
2.8765	
33.57	33.5700

AED LBP EGP

3.6728	1527.00	3.1608
1.1804	2152.74	4.1811
0.98	407.13	0.9108
9.74	4050.40	0.9510
1.01	415.41	0.9383
12.04	5003.77	0.9282
415.75	0.9201	
2.4053		2.2371
1.0752	447.01	

GBP CHF JPY

0.15763	0.40075	35.1011
0.16096	0.40527	35.3435
1.93723	4.92911	431.406
1.58814	3.98724	345.162
1.1178	2.8419	245.868

for Fixing

Months	Months	Year
5.7422	5.7813	5.9903
7.5104	7.5104	7.4949
0.7508	0.7604	0.7813
3.6562	3.7500	3.9891
1.5625	1.6879	1.8598
3.6563	3.7556	3.9688
6.2393	4.4330	

Cross Rates

Buy	Sell
0.705	0.710
1.19	1.195
0.2923	0.2943
0.4722	0.4747
0.117	0.1178
0.5356	0.5423
0.3485	0.3503
0.3557	0.3587

By Glasbergen

large belly button, one this before!

HAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

GET THE

HARD TO MOVE THIS KIND OF HEADACHE WHEN GOING THROUGH A PHOCE

Now anyone can have a headache! Try this game. It's the only one that's been designed to give you a headache. It's the only one that's been designed to give you a headache. It's the only one that's been designed to give you a headache.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Ever feel like you don't have control over what's going on? You could have that feeling today, although it wouldn't be true. You always have control. The only question is, how much do you want to exert? Sometimes you control things by walking away. Today, follow the urge. It'll lead you in a healthy direction.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you've created a mess, don't despair. You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, remember? Sometimes you have to rip things up before you can put them back together in a better way. Don't stress out over a project that's not finished yet. Just keep working on it.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You're looking good, and you're willing to take action. You're decisive today, and that helps. If you keep your overall objective in mind, you'll know precisely what to do next, and you'll have the courage to do it. Just start by getting that objective nailed down. After that, everything will be easy.

CANCER: (June 22 to July 21) Conditions are still good for money coming in. You're using all imagination and most of your education to pull off the deal of the century. If you're in sales, you can even contact people who have already said no. Some might even contact you. Just don't let yourself feel so flush you start throwing your money around.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You're still looking good, and there are fabulous opportunities all around you. This is not always the case, but right now you have a chance to gain fame and fortune. It's not necessarily easy, and won't be from winning the lottery. It looks like it's from providing service to others. Sorry.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You know that feeling you get when something needs to be taken care of? You're sensitive to that sort of thing. Something's nagging at you. It's such a small little detail that nobody else would even notice. But you notice, and you care, and you'd better get it done so you can move on to other things by tomorrow.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You want to do something with a group, but obligations are nagging at you. The only way you'll be able to reach a good compromise is to set priorities. The sun's in Virgo, so you'll have to learn the lesson that Virgo's trying to teach you. Virgo's the most organised sign in the zodiac, if that gives you a clue.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Looks like that moment could occur today, where you and the boss (or parent or teacher) come face to face. You've finally had enough and want to say what's on your mind. Be compassionate, caring, loving and respectful. And don't feel like you have to go into this battle all by yourself. Take a couple of buddies along.

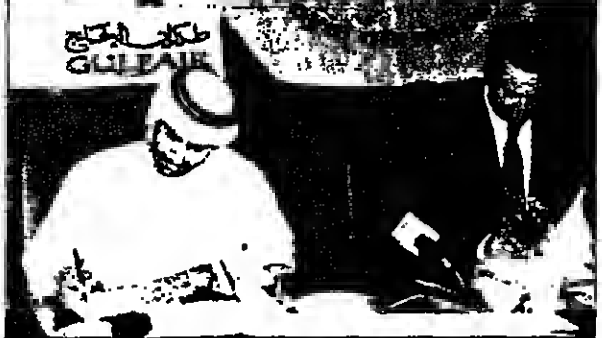
SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your career gets another boost and opportunities are plentiful. Venture a little further from your regular routine. Somebody needs you and what you have to sell, but they won't come to you. It will have to be the other way around. A business trip or expedition to scout out a new area could be profitable, and fun.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Looks like a secret's leaking out today — something to do with finances, hopefully not yours. If there is an error in your accounting, it's bound to surface soon. Balance your checkbook if you haven't in a while. There's a surprise concerning money lurking somewhere in your immediate vicinity.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Somebody you'd like to boss around isn't going for it. Don't get too involved in trying to dominate others. It's just not going to work right now. Instead, charm them with your wit and brilliant smile. You might even get the most difficult person on your side. That would be an excellent idea, and a brilliant triumph.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) The workload is hectic. You have to move quickly to get everything done, and you have high standards to work toward. Yes, you do want to be perfect, and you'll probably pull it off. You are a naturally exquisite actor, so at least you can pretend everything's going well. That will be a calming influence on the others.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli



Gulf Air To Code Share Flights With Royal Air Maroc

GULF AIR signed a code share agreement with Royal Air Maroc setting the pace for further cooperation in a number of other areas to be discussed and developed in due course.

The agreement reflects the desire of Gulf Air and Royal Air Maroc to enhance air transportation between the countries of the Gulf and Morocco. The agreement is the first of its kind among Arab carriers for long and direct flights between the two regions, the president of Gulf Air said.

Following the agreement, three weekly flights will be operated jointly by Gulf Air and Royal Air Maroc on a code-sharing basis.

Describing the agreement as a unique and a major landmark in Morocco's civil aviation history, the chairman of Royal Air Maroc said that it would benefit passengers of both airlines. "Air Maroc will place its network in North America and Africa at the disposal of Gulf Air's passengers. In turn, Gulf Air will offer the benefit of its extensive network in Asia to the passengers of Royal Air Maroc," he said.

Members of Frequent Flyer Programmes of Gulf Air and Royal Air Maroc travelling on code-sharing flights will be eligible for a series of privileges including miles and points. The agreement is perceived as the first phase of extensive cooperation and coordination in the field of marketing between the two carriers.

Both airlines are currently conducting extensive studies to examine the possibility of expanding code-sharing flights to other main hubs of the owner states of Gulf Air. Joint flights between Casablanca and the

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDANIAN

TELEPHONE: 60711 / 60719

ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 15/09/1998

PART	12 MONTHS HIGH	12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANSACTIONS	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
S	355,500	170,000	ARAB BANK	18.0	9.1	39	7560	1663765	223.00	220.50	2.50
S	2,030	1,420	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.4	4.24	7	2181	3608	1.65	1.65	-
S	3,200	1,030	BANK OF JORDAN	2	0.00	2	2400	2544	1.05	1.06	.01
S	6,510	2,610	THE HOUSING BK.	19.0	3.23	16	5844	17532	3.01	3.00	.01
S	1,120	1,740	JOR. KUNAFI BANK	8	0.00	3	293	525	1.79	1.80	.01
S	870	580	JOR. GULF BANK	9	0.00	3	2500	1450	.59	.58	.01
S	3,910	1,690	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.6	0.00	9	2242	3874	1.74	1.72	.02
S	3,900	1,350	JOR. INV. P.F. BANK	22.8	3.28	3	200	297	1.49	1.48	.01
S	920	600	WILAYAT. INV. GR.	9	0.00	12	6750	4772	.72	.70	.02
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 290.30 %CHG: -0.93											
2,850 1,740 JOR. FRENCH INSUR.											
7.5 9.33 3 1200 3217 2.69 2.68 .01											
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 127.37 %CHG: -0.05											
3 1200 3217											
S	2,240	1,470	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.7	5.54	13	4844	7216	1.48	1.49	.01
S	5,200	3,550	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	18.5	3.33	5	300	1353	4.75	4.51	.24
S	1,400	740	HATL. PORTFOLIO	31.1	0.00	2	600	468	.79	.78	.01
S	1,130	690	REAL ESTATE INV.	13.7	0.00	1	100	140	.74	.70	.04
S	590	280	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	9	0.00	4	1350	378	.30	.28	.02
S	4,600	1,880	ARAB INTL. INV. EDC.	9.7	2.05	4	3000	5830	1.94	1.95	.01
S	1,350	890	KARKA EDUCATION	20.5	0.00	1	550	490	.89	.89	-
S	1,830	1,060	UNITED CO.	5.1	9.57	6	1400	1611	1.18	1.15	.03
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 106.80 %CHG: -1.58											
36 12244 17485											
S	3,900	1,840	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	11.5	5.67	8	3336	6470	1.93	1.94	.01
S	4,110	1,600	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	16.6	0.00	1	300	471	1.60	1.57	.03
S	6,500	4,000	ARAB POTASH CO.	19.7	5.00	1	2000	8000	4.00	4.00	-
S	11,250	10,050	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	0.42	4	110	1163	10.60	10.56	.04
S	1,670	1,060	INDUSTRIAL CORN. MGR.	67.4	0.00	4	1274	1451	1.15	1.14	.01
S	7,350	5,500	JOR. MORTG. HILLS	7.7	3.39	1	100	590	5.70	5.90	.20
S	5,740	2,400	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	7.4	2.78	22	5438	14673	2.70	2.70	-
S	5,890	1,100	JOR. CEMENT IND.	5.0	8.70	3	1450	1668	1.16	1.15	.01
S	3,440	1,020	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	9.1	9.09	5	1630	1792	1.10	1.10	-
S	1,420	560	KAFIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	2	400	235	.60	.57	.03
S	6,250	4,700	DAR ALAHAD. INV.	6.25	0.00	2	1100	6160	5.61	5.60	.01
S	2,980	1,700	ARAB ALUM. IND.	12.7	14.53	3	1050	1806	1.75	1.72	.03
S	570	390	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	13.9	0.00	1	2000	820	.41	.41	-
S	3,720	1,880	GENERAL INVESTMENT	15.3	2.99	1	100	335	3.30	3.35	.05
S	1,280	530	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	4	3350	1407	.41	.41	-
S	590	300	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	22	16000	5173	.34	.32	.02
S	1,760	760	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	9.2	8.89	1	200	180	.90	.90	-
S	2,300	700	KAZI. CABLE WIRE, RFAC	34.2	0.00	10	4850	3563	.74	.73	.01
S	1,250	730	ULTRA. SULFATE	7.3	0.00	5	3250	1338	.43	.41	.02
S	3,470	1,150	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	14.0	4.72	2	250	338	1.27	1.27	-
S	700	390	KAWTHER INVEST.	9	0.00	2	200	94	.47	.47	-
S	1,280	530	UNIV. MOON. IND.	9.8	8.82	150	20850	148780	.72	.68	.04
S	920	500	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	9	0.00	3	1400	728	.53	.52	.01
S	1,600	1,200	KAZI. CHLORINE	8.8	7.94	3	179	225	1.26	1.26	-
S	1,080	600	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	9.0	15.63	12	7200	4660	.66	.64	.02
S	1,550	1,400	KAZI. RAY. BIPV. REAR	14.6	0.00	2	4000	1460	1.23	1.21	.02
S	1,310	910	INTL. TOBACCO	7.0	5.83	26	17650	17622	.98	1.00	.02
S	1,220	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	10.8	0.00	5	664	651	1.02	.98	.04
S	890	680	JORDAN STEEL	9.6	8.14	18	60232	52073	.86	.86	-
S	730	580	KAZI. ALUM. IND.	34.2	0.00	19	10898	7528	.70	.69	.01
S	670	530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	9.8	0.00	13	7450	4072	.57	.54	.03
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 79.94 %CHG: -0.23											
357 367036 298925											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 175.08 %CHG: -0.79											
480 410450 2017992											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 15/09/1998											
+N	1,000	1,000	JOR. INT. INSURANCE CO	8	0.00	1	100	95	1.00	.95	.05
	490	270	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	100	33	.35	.33	.02
	500	340	JOR. TRADE FMC.	9	0.00	8	27550	10165	.40	.39	.01
	900	500	UNION TR.	1	0.00	1	2000	1080	.56	.54	.01
	620	240	ARAB FIS. INVEST.	9	0.00	1	500	130	.26	.26	-
N	1,080	1,000	INT. ARAB INVESTORS	8	0.00	1	100	105	1.00	1.05	.05
	780	560	AL-DANIEL	34.5	0.00	1	100	148	.56	.59	.03
	680	090	JOR. IND. MATCH-JERCO	9	0.00	1	250	33	.12	.13	.01
	600	270	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	7	1200	1404	.33	.33	-
	430	230	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	28.8	0.00	2	4800	4634	.25	.25	-
	400	230	HATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	2	2000	206	.26	.26	-
	580	260	KAZI. MULT. ENG. RAMICO	9	0.00	29	50350	15409	.30	.31	.01
S	1,230	690	RETAIL MKT CONCRETE	7.5	0.00	1	1500	1500	.70	.70	-
	500	280	ARAB ELECT. IND.	9	0.00	1	4500	1355	.35	.35	-
S	690	580	MIDWEST PHARM. 30R	9	0.00	1	250	320	.58	.58	-
T	2,040	1,150	UNION TOBACCO 87.5%	13.2	0.04	15	63000	120995	2.03	2.07	.94
	720	570	KAZI. PHARM.	8	0.00	6	5300	3345	.65	.63	.02
	350	190	IND. ENG.	8	0.00	11	27250	5995	.22	.22	-

Olympics-Australia wants to jail drug pushers, not athletes

SEOUL (R) — Australia, which hosts the next Olympic Games in the year 2000, said on Tuesday it wanted to jail drug pushers — rather than athletes — with its controversial proposal

ecuted," Australia's leading IOC official Kevin Gosper said after an IOC meeting.

"But we don't want to give the impression that when athletes come to Australia for the 2000

drug pushers and suppliers, not athletes," Gosper said.

IOC director general Francois Carrard said the IOC agreed with Australia's position as long as it applied to push-

states allowed for criminal prosecution for trafficking in steroids. New South Wales, where Sydney is located, does not.

But he added: "We are pushing for the law to be in place in New South Wales before the Summer Games." His report had called for criminal penalties, similar to that which apply to narcotics, for trafficking or manufacturing anabolic steroids, Beta 2 agonists and human growth hormones.

At the world swimming championships in Perth earlier this year a Chinese swimmer and coach were banned for trying to smuggle a batch of human growth hormones into the country.

The IOC continued to discuss its proposals for a new drug-testing agency aimed at catching cheats around the world with random out-of-competition tests. Olympic officials also want all sports to adopt the same bans for offenders.

The moves will be discussed at a special world conference on doping in Switzerland in February. The agency will be backed by millions of dollars that the IOC receives from television rights for the Games.

"I think the IOC should put in a lot of its own resources," Canada's Dick Pound said. Corporate sponsors, including "ethical pharmaceuticals", governments and sports federations may also contribute, he said.

Ronaldo ready to down Real Madrid

MILAN (AFP) — Ronaldo reckons that one goal will be enough to down his old enemies Real Madrid when Inter Milan face the European Cup holders.

Ronaldo, who joined Inter last year after a season with Real's archrivals Barcelona, also believes that Barca fans in the Seville crowd will get behind him on Wednesday night.

"The last time I played against Real Madrid, it finished 1-0 at Barcelona," the Brazilian recalled. "I scored from a penalty."

"And I reckon that one goal, or a penalty, will be all it needs this time."

Real have been banned from using their Bernabeu stadium after a crossbar collapsed last season, forcing groundsmen to find new goalposts.

Ronaldo said: "Real could be in for a surprise. There are a lot of Barcelona fans there and I think they will be supporting Inter. Not just because they're against Real Madrid, but also because of me."

"I still feel close to the Barcelona supporters, and I think they will show that the feeling is mutual."

As for his own form, after missing Sunday's Serie A opener at Cagliari through suspension, he added: "I feel fine, and I'm happy to be playing."

Inter's European Champions League opener will be an even bigger return for Ronaldo's strike partner, Ivan Zamorano, who has played for both Real Madrid and Seville.

Zamorano, who was the season's top goalscorer



Brazilian striker and star of Italian Serie A team Inter Milan, Ronaldo (R), talks to staff of Sevilla's St. Paul international airport upon arrival Monday. Inter will play Spanish First Division team Real Madrid at Sevilla's Sanchez Pizjuan stadium during their Champions League first round clash on Wednesday (AFP Photo)

when Real won the Liga in 1994-95, said: "Spain will be welcoming me with open arms, and that includes my old friends at Real. I've been talking to them every day recently."

Zamorano warned Inter not to assume that Real would be easier to beat away from the Bernabeu or to take their eyes off their star forward, Raul.

"Real are an awesome

side to face, whether it's at Madrid, Seville ... or Castel di Sangro," he said.

"Believe me, it's better we didn't count on that being an advantage."

As for the man to watch, Zamorano said: "Rather than one individual player it's more a whole department we should be worried about: their attack."

"They play with four men up front and all of them are

very good. We've got to be very careful."

"If I had to name one player, though, it would be Raul," the Chilean told the Gazzetta dello Sport. "After a rotten World Cup, this is just the opportunity he needs to make a comeback in grand style."

"I know Raul and I know that when it comes the big matches, he can really get the whole team fired up."

UEFA says clubs must face consequences of dropping out

GENEVA (AP) — European soccer's governing body UEFA on Monday continued its battle against a proposed European Super League, warning clubs who decide to drop out of UEFA competitions that they will have to "face the consequences."

UEFA General Secretary Gerhard Aigner said clubs joining such a league, already proposed by Italy's Media Partners, would be prevented from taking part in their own national competitions.

"UEFA will follow its route, we will organize our European cups and the clubs have the possibility to take part or not," said Aigner.

"Those who do not want to participate have the choice of following our route or eventually to face the consequences which present themselves at national and inter-

national level," he said. However, Aigner said he didn't think the situation would come to that. "We have an interest to stay together," he said.

He was speaking as UEFA's specially convened task force came together in Geneva Monday for its first meeting.

The task force, comprising senior executives of European leagues and clubs as well as UEFA officials, is charged with reforming European club competitions between now and the end of the year.

UEFA formed the task force in reaction to proposals by Media Partners for a Super League.

Aigner said he thought the "turbulence" created by Media Partners' plans had provided the chance to recon-

sider the structure of European soccer. Aigner and other officials declined to discuss specifics of what had been discussed at the meeting. But he said possibilities for reform were still open, including a possible alternative to the already agreed formula of having four groups of six teams in the Champions League next season.

That would involve raising the number of teams taking part to 32 and would mean having extra days, Aigner said.

Rick Parry of England's Liverpool FC said the discussions had been fairly constructive, but said there would need to be a "remodeling" of the proposals UEFA had presented in order to come to a compromise.

"I think the UEFA position

is, can they meet clubs' aspirations through reworking their own competitions?" Parry said. "We are committed to working with UEFA in the hope that a satisfactory outcome can be reached," he added.

Jean-Michel Aulas of France's Olympique Lyonnais said UEFA had made concrete proposals to which some clubs had counter-arguments.

But he said there was a common will to continue basing the organization of European soccer on sporting criteria as opposed to commercial considerations.

A report from the meeting will be presented to the next meeting of UEFA's executive committee in Lisbon on October 6-7.

Sports in Brief

Camacho confirmed as Spain coach

MADRID (AFP) — The Spanish Football Federation on Tuesday confirmed it had chosen Jose Antonio Camacho as new national coach to succeed Javier Clemente after accepting his demand to pick his own backroom staff. The Federation announced it would officially present Camacho at a press conference during the afternoon. Camacho, who previously coached Espanyol and Real Madrid, said Monday he would only accept the post if he were allowed a free rein to choose his own staff. The 43-year-old is now set to sign a contract worth 80 million pesetas (\$566,000) a season. Clemente resigned last week after a humiliating Euro 2000 qualifier defeat in Cyprus. Camacho could have been preparing for Real Madrid's defence of the European Cup, which begins Wednesday against Inter Milan. But he resigned after just three weeks at the Bernabeu in the summer following a contractual disagreement.

Canal Plus wins Euro basketball rights

MONTE CARLO (R) — Sports marketing organisation ISL Worldwide said on Tuesday it signed an accord giving French pay television group Canal Plus exclusive broadcasting rights in Europe to basketball events from 1999 to 2004. It said in a statement issued at the Sportel TV sport trade fair here that it signed a six-year agreement with Sport+. Canal Plus's sports rights acquisition unit, for Sport+ to sub-license the rights "to all broadcasters from Greece to Russia" from January 1999, ISL said it had recently acquired the rights from the International Basketball Federation (FIBA). The accord with Canal Plus covers the men's and women's World Championships in 2002, Men's and Women's European Championships in 1999, 2001 and 2003, the men's EuroLeague Final Fours and EuroStars Events in 1999 and 2000, the women's EuroLeague Final Fours and men's Saponia Cup Finals from 1999 to 2004.

Beckenbauer does not rule out running for DFB presidency

BONN (R) — Franz Beckenbauer hinted on Tuesday he might stand for the presidency of the German Soccer Federation (DFB). Amid widespread criticism of current DFB president Egidius Braun, Bayern Munich vice-president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has pressed for reforms and said Beckenbauer should take the top job. "The ideas of Karl-Heinz Rummenigge are very good," Bayern president Beckenbauer, a World Cup winner as both player and coach, told Bavarian television. "There is a great need (for a change)." Braun, 73, has come under fire for his search for a new national coach since Berti Vogts stepped down last week. He was criticised in the press for offering the coach's job to former international Paul Breitner before changing his mind after Breitner blasted DFB officials in a newspaper interview. Braun eventually appointed 61-year-old Erich Ribbeck, who has plenty of experience but not the pedigree of his predecessors. "The DFB is very rigid, it takes care of the administration but has no responsibilities," Beckenbauer said in Tuesday's interview. "The DFB is an amateur federation and will always be. Paul Breitner would have brought some change." After hinting he might retire, Braun said in an interview released on Sunday that he would apply for another term at next month's DFB congress.

Carlos thanked for 'saving Ronaldo's life'

MADRID (AFP) — Real Madrid's Brazilian star Roberto Carlos on Tuesday revealed that the father of Brazilian teammate Ronaldo had thanked him for saving his son's life before the World Cup final, when Ronaldo suffered convulsions.

"Ronaldo's father thanked me for saving his son's life. As we were starting the same room he knew I was the first one to become aware of the situation," Roberto Carlos told AS sports daily.

He added that Brazilian teammate Giovanni, who plays his club football with Real's rivals Barcelona, was wrong to have accused him of harming Ronaldo by revealing the problems the star had before the July 13 final against France, which a subdued Brazil lost 3-0.

"The only thing I said about Ronaldo was that (team) doctor Lidio Toledo had confirmed to me he did not know if it was an epileptic fit or a convulsion."

"When we drove him to hospital, Ronaldo asked me to warn coach (Mario) Zagallo that he would be asking to play as soon as he got back. He took on an enormous responsibility."

Roberto Carlos and Ronaldo will be on opposing sides in Wednesday's long-awaited Champions League clash between holders Real Madrid and Inter Milan, whom Ronaldo led to the UEFA Cup last season.

At the weekend Roberto Carlos will face Giovanni when Real take on Barca in the Spanish league.

Man. United link for Nakata

MILAN (AFP) — Manchester United could be about to pay \$16.5 million for Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata — five times what Perugia paid for their new playmaker last week, the Italian press reported on Tuesday.

Asia's Player of the Year made an extraordinary debut in the Serie A on Sunday, scoring twice against reigning champions Juventus in a 4-3 defeat for Perugia.

The offer was made to Perugia's managing director Alessandro Gaucchi by an envoy from Rupert Murdoch, whose BSkyB TV company is planning to take over at Old Trafford, the Gazzetta dello Sport claimed.

However, it was flatly rejected by the newly promoted club, who will be counting on Nakata's talents to avoid relegation this season.

His performance on Sunday has even sparked a row between team

coach Ilario Castagner and the club's president, Alessandro's father Luciano.

Perugia won a late penalty when they trailed 4-2 and although it was successfully converted by substitute Antonio Bernardini, Gaucchi said: "Nakata should have taken it."

"He had a chance to score three goals and a hat-trick against Juventus on his debut in the Serie A would have gone down in history."

"I am very upset about it, because the lad deserved it and the club's image would have benefited from it too," he said.

Paying tribute to Nakata's work-rate, both on and off the pitch, the president said: "Hidetoshi is a gentle and intelligent young man, and he has already studied the secrets and the major players of our championship."

"He's determined to make a success of it here."

Nakata's arrival and the support of hundreds of Japanese fans has meanwhile been a boon to the local tourist industry, according to Giorgio Mencaroni, head of the Perugian hoteliers' association.

"The trend that's being established if for Japanese people living in Italy to come to Perugia when the team are playing at home," Mencaroni said.

"Many are of them are arranging weekends in Perugia which include a hotel and the match. There is a lot of interest in Nakata and he could become a very useful promotional vehicle."

"The group of Japanese journalists who are now based here, for example, are giving coverage to the whole of the Umbria region."

TODAY AT	PHILADELPHIA 1'	PHILADELPHIA 2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	Hikem Vines Theatre
	TEL: 4634144	TEL: 4634144	TEL: 5699238	TEL: 5677420	TEL: 5934793	TEL: 5934793	TEL: 4625155
	Sophie Marceau in Leo Tolstoy's ANNA KARENINA Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Adel Imam ... in AL ZA'EEM Shows: 6:30, 9:30 Additional shows Thursday and Friday evenings at 12:30 GODZILLA Shows: 12:30, 3:30	CONCORD 1' NASSER Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 CONCORD 2' UP CLOSE & PERSONAL Shows: 3:30, 5:30 only	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria ARMAGEDDON Shows: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria GREAT EXPECTATIONS Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45	WATCH OUT FOR THE NEW PLAY Terrorism



Australia's Susie O'Neill is reflected in the water during her 100m butterfly heat at the 16th Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday. O'Neill qualified in first place for the final with a time of 1:00.87 minutes and is on course for another gold medal at the games, having already won a gold medal in four other events so far (Reuters photo)

tonight than I normally do," Thorpe said. "I've realized I can't hold back in the first 200 and try to come over the top of these guys on the international scene."

Hacken bemoaned the fact he didn't feel exhausted at the far. She has eight Commonwealth golds in all but can still beat Wenden's record of nine with victories in the 200-metre butterfly and 4x100-metre medley relay Wednesday.

"Obviously I wanted to win by almost two seconds at the 150-metre mark."

"I knew I had to swim the best 50 metres I've ever swum," said Cowley. "I was only ever ahead at the finish but that's where you want to be." It took until the third race

end of the race, saying, "I probably should have gone out harder."

"It doesn't hurt me as much as it should. Maybe I've learned something from that race."

He said he expected the world record to come under that the next time the pair meet.

Thomas continued to work out under O'Neill's imposing shadow with a victory in 59.42 seconds. O'Neill clocked 59.61 while Australian Kathryn Gordon was third in 59.70.

World champion silver medalist Helen Denman gave the Australians their fourth gold with a win over former world champion Samantha Riley in 1:00.26.

Denman, 31, is a two-time Olympic champion, a 1996

for another nation to claim a medal, when England's Adam Whitehead got the bronze behind Crowley.

World championship silver medalist Helen Denman gave the Australians their fourth gold with a win over former world champion Samantha Riley in 1:00.26.

Denman, 31, is a two-time Olympic champion, a 1996

In the women's 100-metre butterfly, O'Neill was beaten into second by Petria Thomas, who set the Commonwealth record with a bronze at the Perth world championships.

O'Neill's placing gave her four gold and two silver medals from her six events so far.

In the men's 100-metre freestyle, O'Neill was beaten into second by Simon Cowley scored a breaststroke double when he added Tuesday's 200-metre title to the earlier 100-metre gold medal.

Cowley finished in 2:13.13, edging compatriot Ryan Mitchell (2:13.20), who led the breaststroke. Riley won the 200-metre event earlier in the meet. Canada's Lauren van Oosten claimed the bronze.

With 10 of 12 individual medals in the bag, Australia's men's 4x100-metre freestyle relay team of Michael Klim, Ashley Callus, Chris Fydler and Thorpe wrapped up a ruthless session.

cleans up in medal count

making the rounds Tuesday described the event in the Malaysian capital as the

Commonwealth Games medal list	
KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) —	Commonwealth Games

Young coach Skibbe relishing challenge at Dortmund

But Skibbe insists his "I got my first serious injuries when I was 18. I was wouldn't be able to play any more," he said.

me and a more modest target is appropriate.

"Next year we'd like to challenge for the German championship but this year we just want to get back into international competition," he said.

Despite being forced out of the game at a young age, kibbe insists he doesn't feel any frustration that he can't come on to the pitch and put things right if they start to go wrong.

BEAUTIFULLY FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT

Consists of two bedrooms, two bathrooms, dining room, living room, saloon, kitchen with a breakfast area, private central heating, telephone, garage and entrance. Location: Near the 5th Circle.

Contact Tel.: 5922617 or Mobile: (079) 22083

FURNISHED APARTMENTS FOR RENT

In Deir Ghabar, the American Embassy street, near the Chinese restaurant. 3rd floor. Consists of 3 bedrooms with their utilities, super deluxe American furniture.

Tel.: 5852578

* First floor between Fabela and Tia's Al Aji, near the Kilo light signals, behind Dana Trade Centre. Consists of 3 bedrooms with their utilities (excellent furniture).

Tel.: 5532007

**BECAUSE YOU
DESERVE**

The Best



Gardens Street, Abu Khayya Center Behind
Jordan Golf Club. Tel: 5516427 / 5-9

FURNISHED APARTMENT FOR RENT

Ground floor. Consists of master bedroom, living room, children room, L-shaped salon, garage, terrace, two entrances, excellent furniture, satellite. Location: Tla'a Al Ali, 300 metres from Gardens St.

Tel.: 5673291

Bodies of slain Iranians arrive in Tehran

TEHRAN (AFP) — The remains of six Iranian diplomats and a journalist slain by the Taliban militia in Afghanistan arrived in Tehran shortly before midnight Monday as President Mohammad Khatami and thousands of other mourners were waiting. Soldiers carried the seven coffins, each draped in the Iranian flag, from the Red Cross plane at Tehran airport to ambulances while a military band played the national anthem followed by dirges, the official IRNA news agency said.

"You should be certain that we shall defend the honour and territorial integrity of the sovereign state of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the best possible way," Khatami told the families of the dead as thousands of mourners clad in black stood by.

Earlier Monday, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned of a "huge threat" of war in the region over Afghanistan but said he was doing his best to prevent it.

The Taliban, which controls

most of neighbouring Afghanistan, appealed for talks with Iran to be held under the U.N. Charter, the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) said as the militia's officials handed over the remains to an Iranian team in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif.

Thomas Gurner, head of the Kabul delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said a four-member Iranian team, which came to Mazar-i-Sharif aboard the Red Cross flight, did not accept two of the nine bodies offered by the Taliban.

Khamenei warned in a message broadcast on state radio and television, "So far I have prevented the raging of a fire in the region, which is not easily extinguishable. But all should know that the threat is very huge and widespread and very near." He said war could only be averted by "forcing the Pakistani army to stop interfering in Afghanistan and by forcing the Taliban leaders to abide by logic and reason and stop their catastrophic acts and compensate for past errors."

Shiite Muslim Iran has accused Pakistan, a close Taliban ally, of playing an active role in the Sunni Muslim militia's spectacular triumph over other Afghan factions in the war-torn country.

Khamenei, who is also commander-in-chief of the armed forces, charged that Pakistan military jets participated in a "massacre" of the Shiite population in Bamian, central Afghanistan, which fell to the Taliban militia on Sunday.

"The crimes committed by this heinous and oppressive tribe in central Afghanistan and against the Hazara (Shiite) community in Bamian are far more abhorrent than the massacres of civilians in Mazar-i-Sharif, which fell to the militia August 8, he charged.

The Taliban captured Bamian Sunday from the Shiite Hezb-i-Wahdat faction, and Khamenei accused the Sunni Islamist militia of "condemning to death every male in Bamian older than seven."

The Taliban rejected the Iranian allegations. "The Iranian claims about a mas-

sacre in Bamian are baseless," Taliban spokesman Wakil Ahmad Mutawakkil told AIP Monday.

He also denied that Pakistan had given the Taliban military help and invited the Red Cross to send a fact-finding mission to Bamian.

The Iranian leader urged Bamian Shiites to continue resisting the "dogmatic and savage" Taliban, "which is alien from the shining teachings of Islam."

"Resort to God and bravely withstand the beasts. God willing you will triumph," he said.

Khamenei also said Iranians were "impatiently" waiting for their government to decide how to deal with the Taliban after the murder of the diplomats.

"The Iranian nation is in pain over the insecurity caused at our eastern border and the unjust spilling of the blood of our diplomats," he said.

"With a heart filled with pain and sorrow, I am impatiently waiting for our statesmen to make a decision against this heinous and savage tribe," the Iranian leader said.



QUEEN, CLINTON INAUGURATE PEACE CORPS HEADQUARTERS: Queen Noor and Hillary Clinton react to the ribbon being cut by Sergeant Schriver at the dedication of the new Peace Corps building in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday. Schriver was the first Peace Corps director (see story on page 3) (Reuters photo)

Madonna gets thumbs up from Sanskrit scholars

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Madonna's new "mantra pop" style has won grudging approval from some Hindu scholars in India, despite initial reservations about her Sanskrit pronunciation. Scholars in the holy city of Varanasi had chided the material girl's diction when reciting Sanskrit mantras on her latest album "Ray of Light." However, when a group of them gathered together to watch a live broadcast of Madonna's performance at the recent MTV awards, the verdict was more favourable, the United News of India (UNI) reported.

"Doing well," "fast learner" and even "genuine seeker" was the expert opinion on the pop star's rendering of certain mantras.

Fergie denies she is to wed Italian count

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's Duchess of York — "Fergie" — is not engaged and has no plans to remarry, her spokeswoman insisted Monday, after reports that the duchess was to become the wife of an Italian count. The estranged wife of Count Gaddo della Gherardesca told several British tabloid newspapers that she was ready to divorce her husband, whom she has been separated from for eight years, to enable him to marry Sarah Ferguson. "These claims are very wide of the mark and completely unfounded," the duchess' spokeswoman said.

Prison offers guests a glimpse behind bars

LONDON (R) — A top security London prison is offering 200 guests a bed and breakfast special in its cells in a bid to show the public a glimpse of life behind bars. Brixton prison governor, Mike O'Sullivan, said guests would be housed in a recently refurbished part of the 19th century jail and would get a prison supper before being locked in their cells for the night. They will be given a wake-up call at 6.30 a.m., and released after breakfast at 7.30 a.m. "Society has consigned some of its members to prison. It strikes us as only reasonable that society... should be kept informed as to what goes on inside the prison's wall."

Patients flee hospital over fears of blood theft

LAGOS (R) — Patients have fled a hospital in northern Nigeria's Taraba state over fears their blood may be stolen for use in ritual sacrifices, the News Agency of Nigeria said. The agency said patients took off after hearing from an undisclosed source that a container had been placed at the gate of Gembu hospital in which human blood was to be collected. It did not say how many patients were involved. State health commissioner, Anthony Manzo, dismissed the rumour of blood thefts and turned down a request from parents whose children had died recently at the hospital to sack all the medical staff, the agency said.

Harrods owner launches own site on the Internet

LONDON (AP) — Harrods owner Mohammed Ali Fayed has launched his own Web site complete with pictures of his late son, Dodi, and Princess Diana, killed together one year ago in a Paris car crash. The site says it is dedicated to carrying a "comprehensive database of newspaper articles relating to Al Fayed's interesting life." It contains a large collection of stories related to Diana and her Aug. 31, 1997, death that can be searched by keyword, author or publication. The site can be reached at www.alfayed.com.

Iraq allows Syrians entry without visa

BAGHDAD (AP) — In a new sign of warming ties, Iraq has decided to allow Syrian nationals to visit the country without visas, a Baghdad weekly reported Tuesday.

Al Itihad said the decision by Baghdad was taken in light of "developing bilateral ties and the growth in trade exchange." It said the Syrians will also be exempt from entry fees.

The weekly gave no figure on the number of Syrians

entering Iraq since the border between the two countries reopened last year. It also did not say whether Iraqis will be treated similarly by the Syrian authorities.

The countries, ruled by rival factions of the Arab Baath Socialist party, long had chilly relations, and Syria supported Iraq in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

Recently, however, there's been a warming of ties. Baghdad shops now brim

with Syrian goods, mainly foodstuffs, clothes and household utensils. Most commercials on Iraq television now promote Syrian industries. Early this month Syria reopened its trade centre in Baghdad after a gap of nearly 18 years.

An Iraqi trade centre is expected to open soon in the Syrian capital, Damascus. The countries agreed on Aug. 20 to restart a pipeline for Iraqi crude that was shut for 16 years.

Turkish jet hijacked in protest of headscarf ban

ANKARA (R) — A man who hijacked a Turkish domestic flight armed with a plastic toy gun was protesting against the government's enforcement of strict bans on Islamic dress at universities, local media said on Tuesday.

"The provocation over headscarves by certain political circles and the religious press led to a lunatic hijacking a plane," the mass circulation Sabah daily said.

A lone hijacker, named as Isan Akyuz, forced his way into the cockpit of a Turkish Airlines plane bound for Istanbul from Ankara late on Monday and, wielding a toy gun, forced the pilot to divert to the Black Sea city of Trabzon.

Anatolian news agency reported a police statement as saying Akyuz was suffering from psychological problems and apparently carried out the hijack on his own initiative, without support.

All the 84 passengers and crew were later released unharmed.

"He said he did it for those who could not register at universities due to their headscarves... First we go to Trabzon, then to Chechnya," he [the hijacker] said. Anatolian quoted the plane's pilot, Anil Isil, as saying after the hijack.

Strict enforcement of decades-old secularist dress codes, demanded by the powerful military, has seen hundreds of women barred from registering at universities for refusing to abandon their Islamic-style headscarf for identity photographs.

A ban on Islamic attire at the universities provoked large Islamist demonstrations earlier this year driving a wedge between Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz and the secularist generals.

Iraqi Kurd leaders hope for unity after Albright meeting

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The leaders of the two main Kurdish factions in Iraq met this week in the U.S. capital in an attempt to bring their organisations together, the State Department said Monday.

Rival leaders Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani met Thursday or Friday with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the State Department said.

Albright met Barzani, who heads the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) last Thursday, and Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), on Monday.

"Reconciliation between the Kurdish factions... is an important goal of the United States," State Department spokesman James Rubin said.

"There's a greater recognition of the importance of working together, that their common enemy is Saddam Hussein and not anyone else," Rubin said.

During her meeting with both men Albright discussed the situation in Iraq and the security and humanitarian assistance programmes for Kurds under way in the northern part of the country, Rubin said.

The Kurds have been under international protection since the end of the Gulf war in 1991.

The United States has been calling for an end to the con-

flikt between the KDP and the PUK, which have controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf war.

But their partnership collapsed in 1994 due to rows over power-sharing and tax revenue, and more than 3,000 people have been killed in intermittent fighting since then.

The latest round of fighting between Iraqi Kurds erupted late last year when the KDP repulsed a PUK offensive with the help of Turkish troops. A fragile ceasefire has been in place since last November.

But in a sign of improved relations, the KDP and the PUK have recently exchanged more than 200 prisoners.

State Department spokesman James Rubin said.

"There's a greater recognition of the importance of working together, that their common enemy is Saddam Hussein and not anyone else," Rubin said.

During her meeting with both men Albright discussed the situation in Iraq and the security and humanitarian assistance programmes for Kurds under way in the northern part of the country, Rubin said.

The Kurds have been under international protection since the end of the Gulf war in 1991.

The United States has been calling for an end to the con-

Nurse convicted in Saudi murder returns to work

LONDON (AP) — A British nurse convicted in Saudi Arabia of murdering an Australian colleague has returned to work, prompting an investigation by a nursing disciplinary body.

Deborah Parry, 40, is working at Holy Cross Hospital in Surrey, southeast of London, said her brother-in-law, Jonathan Ashbee.

The nursing body, the United

Kingdom Central Council, has launched an investigation into Parry's fitness to work, but "hit a brick wall" because the Saudi authorities were unable to provide any confirmation of the murder conviction, spokesman John Knappe said Tuesday.

Parry, with Scottish nurse Lucille McLaughlin, was convicted in Saudi Arabia in the December 1996 murder of

Yvonne Gilford, who was stabbed, suffocated and beaten in her room at a Saudi hospital where all three women worked.

Saudi King Fahd freed the two nurses May 20 in an act of clemency.

Parry and McLaughlin said their confessions to the murder were extracted by brutal treatment from Saudi authorities, and they later retracted them.

Sealing off Palestinian lands revives journey around the checkpoints

GILLO CHECKPOINT (AP) — Trekking together through a stony no-man's land on Monday, Palestinians from all walks of life — urban businessmen, village labourers, mothers and children — chatted, offered advice, and forged almost familial ties.

No, not that way, they murmured to one another, that's where the soldiers are. Here, have a rest under this olive tree; there's no shade ahead. Look, we're lucky that gate's open, or we'd all just have to climb over.

For the first time in more than a year, Israel last week sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip, locking out tens of thousands of Palestinians who want to work, study, or attend family occasions in Israel.

Only urgent medical cases and some commercial shipments were being allowed to pass.

But the West Bank's border is a porous one. Every day, Palestinians have been picking

their way through olive fields, hopping low stone walls and clambering over barbed-wire fences to evade Israeli military checkpoints.

On Monday, the fourth day of the closure, dozens of Palestinians were making a kilometre-long detour on foot under a blazing midday sun to bypass the Israelis' Gillo checkpoint outside the West Bank town of Bethlehem and make their way toward Jerusalem.

Those making the illicit trip said its hardships rankled — but not as much as the humiliation.

Palestinian businessman Ali Jaradat, 27, immaculate in a black suit and red tie, looked irritably at the marks the pale dust had left on his polished black shoes.

"It should take me an hour to drive to work, but it takes four hours this way, getting around the checkpoints," he said.

"It's ridiculous, completely."

In the past, closures have usually come in response to dramatic terror attacks inside Israel. In this case, it was a pre-emptive move: Israel sealed the Palestinian lands hours after one of its elite units gunned down two most-wanted fugitives from the Islamist group Hamas last Thursday.

Closures raise little public outcry in Israel, but they do prompt debate in Israeli military circles. Some argue they have little real effect in fighting terror, but feed frustration that can boil over into violence.

No timetable has been given for this clampdown. Israel said late Monday it would allow about 10,000 Palestinians — one-sixth of those normally allowed in — to enter Israel beginning Tuesday.

But Palestinians feared a larger closure might be extended through the Jewish high holy days beginning next week and continuing

through the end of the month.

In the past, prolonged closures have devastated the Palestinian economy, costing it millions of dollars in lost wages and commercial trade.

Only a month ago, Israeli officials proudly proclaimed there had been no closures at all this year — and touted the economic and political benefits to both sides in keeping the borders open to workers and commercial traffic.

The deep resentment closures fuel among ordinary Palestinians could be clearly seen along the path near Gillo, where Leila Ali, 24, perspired in her veil and long robes as she hobbled across a field of stones. Her curly-haired four-year-old, Khalil, stumbled alongside in tiny sandals.

"It's very difficult, but what can I do?" said Ali, who lives in the West Bank town of Hebron and wanted to visit her sister-in-

law, who was in a Jerusalem hospital after giving birth. "It's no way to live." Even in the best of times, Palestinian access to Israel is highly restricted. Of the nearly three million Palestinians, only about 60,000 have permission to enter Israel daily.

Wisam, 22, who did not want his last name used, was hoping Monday he could get to his job at a Jerusalem grocery store. He is the only person in his 12-member family with a job, he said.

And even menial labour in Israel pays almost four times as much as any work he could find in his hometown, Hebron.

"If this goes on much longer, things will really explode," he said.

Near the end of the path, 20-year-old Mohammed, also afraid to give his last name, was happy to have encountered no soldiers. Now he was retracing his steps

to fetch his mother and sisters, waiting on the other side of the terraced hill.

"We are going to Jerusalem for the circumcision of my little cousin, who is now 40 days old," he said proudly. "We have to be there, because it's such an important occasion. ... Would you like to come?" As the pathway branched onto the main road for Jerusalem, a few travellers stopped and gazed at the sight of a blue and white Israeli police car. But these were traffic cops, not soldiers, and their only interest was in ticketing always-abundant Israeli speeders.

Palestinian taxi drivers lounged at the path's end, waiting for fares.

"Everyone needs a ride from here now," said driver Fayez Hamed, 42. "I'm doing this for service to the homeland!" His driver companion laughed. "Yes, that and 20 shekels (\$5)," he said.

Iraqi leader... restore...
BAGHDAD (AP) — The...
Volume 23
Reg...
effo...
ANMAN — The A...
prosecutor, who is...
ing into a govern...
commission...
the water contami...
crisis, said on Wed...
he expect to refer t...
again officially a...
responsibly for t...
to the Amman Cri...
Court.
We expect to fin...
investigations with...
within two weeks," Pr...
Harashbeh told the J...
Times, Wednesday.
Harashbeh also...
named the arrest o...
more officials from...
the water q...
director, Ahmad O...
lab, Hassan Omar...
Investigations p...
they were involv...
were arrested, and...
investigation," Har...
said.
He did not rule o...
Possibility of deta...
other officials "if in...
investigations prove that...
were involved in the...
crisis."
On Sept. 14, Har...
ordered the arrest o...
employees at the...
Water Treatment Pla...
negligence...
managing the plant.